AGE OF THE WEB CELEB
Lakshmi Chaudhry

MANET, MARDEN & MODERNISM
Arthur C. Danto

The Nation.

OH, CLARK- WE'VE ALL BEEN LAID OFF! THE PAPER IS DOOMED!
WAIT, LOIS- I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
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JANUARY 29, 2007
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NEWSPAPERS ...AND AFTER?

by John Nichols

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LETTERS

Letters

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

PEOPLE IN CLASS HOUSES

Freeland, Wash.

■ As a member of the working class, I make less money than I did in the 1970s. Back then I also had medical and dental coverage, vacation pay and sick leave. There was a union for warehousemen, and we shipped merchandise made in America. In response to Walter Mosley's "Show Me the Money" [Dec. 18] one must look as far back as James Madison and as near as our current plutocratic government. Our country was founded on the Madisonian principle that the people are too dangerous to wield power. To keep order the rich minority must keep the working-poor majority fragmented and separated from decision-making. As long as there is an excess of the poor, wages will be driven lower, and people of all colors will fight among themselves, not against the system.

I come from an impoverished Irish family and my dad used to talk about the "race riots" of the 1960s and say, "See? That's what we all need to be doing in this country. Maybe then people would wake up and shake up—things might change." Like many, he ended up defeated, losing his passion in drink.

Most people don't understand poverty. They think (like Reagan) people choose it, or it's their own fault—they deserve to be in the boat they're in. I'm grateful for Mosley's voice in *The Nation*, a trustworthy source of information I can afford. Thanks for the dignity and respect.

BOBBY CROSBY

Youngstown, Ohio

■ Robert S. Boynton correctly notes one fallacy at the heart of Walter Benn Michaels's *The Trouble With Diversity*: Race does matter, and it cannot and should not be replaced with class ["The Plot Against Equality," Dec. 25]. Yet, as Walter Mosley wrote here just a week earlier, class also matters. Boynton dismisses scholars who study working-class culture as "sentimental" about poverty; but "class" does not equal "poverty."

As Mosley points out, most Americans are working-class, and—as scholars like Jack Metzgar, Nan Enstad, Annette Lareau, Robin Kelley and others have shown—working-class culture is not defined by failure and lack. As we have argued in *New Working-Class Studies*, we need to take class as seriously as other social categories. Class matters—as do race, gender, sexuality and other categories—but none should be privileged over the others. Nor should any be erased.

SHERRY LINKON, JOHN RUSSO, *co-directors*
Center for Working-Class Studies
Youngstown State University

'A TWO-PRONGED STRATEGY' IN ISRAEL

Chicago

■ Bashir Abu-Manneh's criticisms of my book *One Country* ["In Palestine, a Dream Deferred," Dec. 18] would have been more relevant if he had actually reviewed the book rather than what he apparently assumed was in it. He suggests that my advocacy of a single state for Palestinians and Israelis with mechanisms to allow ethnic communities autonomous decision-making power amounts to a "shortcut around the struggle against the occupation" and wonders, "Is it fair to ask 3.5 million occupied Palestinians to wait for redress of their daily sufferings and national humiliation until there is sufficient support among both peoples for a binational solution?" Absolutely not.

I clearly argue for a two-pronged strategy: urgent and escalating resistance to the outcome that Israel is trying to impose on the Palestinians but in conjunction with creating a vision for what comes after this struggle, both for Israelis and Palestinians, that is more convincing, attractive and just than the unachievable yet comforting fantasy of hermetic separation.

Abu-Manneh wonders how if "Palestinians have been struggling to no avail to implement the much less demanding two-state solution," they can ever hope to bring about a one-state solution. Yet nowhere does he actually engage with the answers I provide to this central question, as well as my rebuttals to key assumptions within it, particularly the claim that the two-state solution is indeed the most practicable. I argue that the military, economic and diplomatic strength that allows Israel a veto on a minimally fair and workable territorial division can be rendered powerless (or at least much less effective) in a struggle that is aimed not at dividing the land but providing equal rights to all who live in it.

Abu-Manneh views Israeli opposition to a single state as an immovable object. Perhaps it is, but then no more than Israeli opposition to a two-state solution, which continues in practice through relentless colonization of additional West Bank land. I emphatically acknowledge that "any serious argument for an Israeli-Palestinian democracy in a single state must confront the reality that, at present, Israeli Jews, overall, are deeply hostile to the idea."

Hence my chapter on South Africa does not focus on the postapartheid constitution as a model for Israel-Palestine. Rather, I offer an analysis of the conditions that allowed Afrikaners, who, like Israeli Jews, overwhelmingly opposed a single democratic state in their own country, to eventually embrace that idea, abandoning the exclusionary worldview that had defined their policies for decades. While acknowledging that Palestinians face perhaps a greater challenge than South Africans confronted with apartheid, I argue that there are lessons to be learned from their struggle. I do not argue, as Abu-Manneh seems to suggest, that economic relations between South African whites and blacks on the one hand, and Israelis and Palestinians on the other, are identical. Abu-Manneh asserts that "the creation of a single democratic state is not a pressing demand for most Palestinians." The evidence I provide challenging this conventional position is open to debate, but Abu-Manneh does not even address it.

There are other ways that unwary readers may mistake the carelessness of the review for carelessness in my own analysis, as when Abu-Manneh writes, "Nor does it make sense to describe the Israeli-Palestinian relationship as 'intertwined,' as Abunimah often puts it." In fact the word appears five times in specific contexts that Abu-Manneh conflates into a straw man that he then knocks down. Abu-Manneh accuses me of ignoring the long history of binational thought among Israeli Jews and Palestinians. Of course I do discuss this, but if not in the detail he would have liked, it is because my book is not a history. I agree absolutely with his conclusion that "if the binational idea remains largely divorced from politics, it has no legs to stand on." That is why I wrote *One Country*, to make this necessary reconnection.

ALI ABUNIMAH

ABU-MANNEH REPLIES

New York City

■ My review of *One Country* makes two main criticisms. One: that Abunimah's binational idea has no political constituency or support in Israel-Palestine. Two: that his core notion of Israeli-Palestinian "intertwining," which he utilizes as an argument against national separation, is premised on a flawed analysis of the situation in the West Bank and Gaza since 1991, when Israel instituted its policy of closure. I also argue that advocating binationalism today is effectively asking the Palestinians to continue to suffer under occupation for a very long time indeed. And this at a time when an overwhelming majority of them support a national resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on the creation of a sovereign and independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza with East Jerusalem as capital in accordance with the international consensus on Israel-Palestine rejected by both the United States and Israel.

For Abunimah, as he states in his letter, this international consensus about separation is an "unachievable yet comforting fantasy": Partition is impossible, he argues. Why? Because all

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EDITORIALS

No to Escalation

After his party's dramatic defeat on November 7, George W. Bush seemed, however briefly, to recognize that his Iraq policy wasn't working. He fired Donald Rumsfeld as Defense Secretary, promised to take the Iraq Study Group's report "very seriously" and pledged to work with the new Congress. But his speech January 10 announcing an escalation of the US occupation of Iraq confirms that Bush's "new way forward" is just more of the same, and that his contemptuous disregard of the will of the people and their elected representatives is unchanged.

The President's escalation, set to begin January 15, is the first test of the new Congress. The American people voted to get our troops out of Iraq, not dug deeper in, and it is up to Congress to see that it is done. Democratic leaders announced before Bush's speech that they would offer House and Senate resolutions opposing the escalation. And even though that escalation may be under way by the time Congress acts, and even though the resolution is nonbinding, it can still serve as a highly public rebuke to an imperial White House.

Some Democrats, most notably Senate Foreign Relations Committee chair Joe Biden, are peddling the notion that "as a practical matter, there is no way to say, 'Mr. President, stop.'" But in fact, the opposite is true. A report by the Center for American Progress makes clear that past Congresses have curtailed or ended military deployments. The report notes, for example, that in 1983 the Lebanon Emergency Assistance Act required the President to return to seek authorization if he wished to expand the size of the US contingent in Lebanon. Congress has also acted to cut war funding. In 1970, the report notes, the Supplemental Foreign Assistance Law "prohibited the use of any funds for the introduction of US troops to Cambodia."

While resolutions opposing a troop increase are useful, the Democrats must follow them up with concrete measures that directly challenge Bush's war policy. Jack Murtha, chair of the Defense subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, has vowed to comb through the Administration's upcoming $100 billion supplemental spending bill for Iraq and "fence the funding"—potentially redirecting money from a troop increase toward redeployment. Leaders of the Congressional Progressive Caucus will shortly introduce a six-month proposal for the withdrawal of all US troops from Iraq.

Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative Ed Markey have introduced legislation that would require Congressional approval of any troop increase above the total in Iraq as of January 9. Kennedy said in a speech that same day that it's time for Congress to reassert its "rightful role" in deciding war policy. Noting the similarity between Bush's justification for adding more troops and that used for a similar increase in Vietnam, Kennedy recalled discussion of a commitment to "help to lay the cornerstone for a diverse and independent Asia" and to "stay the course." "That is not President Bush speaking," said Kennedy. "It is President Lyndon Johnson, forty years ago, ordering a hundred thousand more American soldiers to Vietnam."

Even if Congress is ultimately unable to prevent the troop increase, a series of hearings, votes and resolutions can confront the President on his strategy and can lay the groundwork for the larger battle of ending the war.

Pressure is growing on Congress to act. A coalition of peace groups, led by Win Without War, is planning a series of protests across the country. On Martin Luther King Day, the Appeal to Redress, calling for withdrawal and signed by close to 1,000 current members of the military, will be presented to Congress. And on January 27, United for Peace and Justice will mount an antiwar rally in Washington. "A clear response from the American people will shore up support in the Congress," says former Congressman and Win Without War national director Tom Andrews.

Ratcheting up the pressure on Congress is urgent. Blocking the escalation is the first step toward bringing the troops home.

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Media Reform's Moment

The national campaign by Consumers Union, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Christian Coalition and dozens of other groups to prevent AT&T from colonizing the Internet has much in common with the fight by a 28-year-old disabled veteran named Valerie Walasek to keep her favorite radio station on the air. For one thing, both are part of a broad media reform movement that is transforming the debate over communications policy at the national, state and local levels. For another, both scored significant victories in December.

After collecting 1.4 million signatures on petitions, gaining support from musicians such as Moby and the Dixie Chicks and building alliances with key members of Congress, the SavetheInternet.com Coalition forced AT&T to respect network neutrality—the principle that all Internet users must have equal access to all websites—as part of a deal to allow the telecommunications behemoth to acquire BellSouth. Around the same time, radio giant Clear Channel gave in to a noisy petitioning and picketing campaign by Walasek and other fans of the Air America affiliate in Madison, Wisconsin, and reversed a decision to do away with the affiliate's liberal talk format.

A decade ago, when Bob McChesney and John Nichols began arguing in these pages for the formation of a grassroots media reform movement, following the passage of a sweeping giveaway to the corporations known as the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the notion that people power could tip the balance back seemed a bit fanciful. But as 3,000 activists from across the country gather on January 12 in Memphis for the third National Conference for Media Reform, this movement has come of age. Federal Communications Commissioners Michael Copps and Jonathan Adelstein will address the conference, as will Ed Markey, the new chair of the powerful telecommunications subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

No one is predicting the imminent collapse of Big Media and the arrival of a golden age. Telecommunications giants are still out to undermine net neutrality, while media companies continue to push for rule changes that would allow them to own the newspaper and radio and television stations in a single city. Moreover, as Nichols notes in his article on page 11, journalism itself is under threat, as newspapers decline in readership and owners slash staffs and dumb down coverage in an effort to make higher profits.

If the threats are real, however, so too are the possibilities to upend more of Big Media's agenda. The fight will be easier with Democrats like Markey in key positions in Congress and with longtime allies like Bernie Sanders and Sherrod Brown ready to use newly won Senate seats to advance the cause. While Democrats have yet to fully embrace media reform, they're a good deal more sympathetic than the GOP to the movement's emphasis on diversity and democracy. With prodding from the media reform movement, Congressional Democrats might even embrace an affirmative agenda that could make media—particularly media that use the people's airwaves—more likely to serve civic values than the commercial/entertainment values dictated by corporations concerned with the bottom line.

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COMMENT

A Globalization Offensive

Thanks to the aggressive spirit of many newly elected Democrats, this Congress offers an encouraging opening for opponents of corporate-led globalization to go on offense. For decades, the critics of the global system have been pinned down by multinational business and finance and reduced to playing defense. Labor, environment and other reform advocates have mostly tried to block new trade agreements negotiated by Republican and Democratic Presidents. Their efforts usually have fallen short.

This year could be different. In both the House and Senate, the growing nucleus of legislators who are skeptical of or downright hostile to globalization is strong enough to force debates on some reform ideas. That doesn't mean the reformers will necessarily prevail. But they can employ the kind of political jujitsu that gradually leverages change by forcing reluctant officials to cast roll-call votes they would rather avoid. Do incumbents in the middle stand with the public's rising concerns or with the multinationals? The Republican right used this tactic brilliantly for many years as its way to take over the party from traditional conservatives. Progressive Democrats can do the same if they're willing to put some of their fellow Democrats on the spot and discomfit party leaders who may want to avoid divisive controversies. Forcing a roll call and taking down names of those who vote wrong is useful, even if the issue is likely to lose. Voters are educated and mobilized. Bruised incumbents eventually change their views. Or voters change their representatives.

Here are a few global issues that ought to be addressed. They don't deal with every disorder of globalization, but they might jump-start a debate Congress has long avoided.

Sweatshop imports. The principle at stake is whether Congress has the power to regulate any products imported from foreign factories. Global advocates assume not, but Congress has already embraced the opposite precedent.

A few years back, American consumers discovered to their horror that fur collars on made-in-China coats purchased in US stores were made from the fur of cats and dogs. The Humane Society of the United States conducted an eighteen-month undercover investigation and exposed the slaughter of more than 2 million domestic dogs and cats by garment makers in China and other Asian countries. Congress acted swiftly. It enacted the Dog and Cat Protection Act of 2000, banning all imported garments made with dog or cat fur. The bill included fines of up to $10,000 for each illegal item and barred repeat violators from importing or exporting any fur products.

Question: If Congress can protect the rights of dogs and cats in foreign trade, will it do the same for the young girls—some as young as 11—who work in sweatshops? They stitch garments for as little as 6 cents an hour and typically work twelve- to sixteen-hour days, sometimes longer and often in brutal conditions.

The vile human abuses lurking behind famous brand names have been repeatedly exposed by Charles Kernaghan of the National Labor Committee, which has been investigating factories in Central America, China, Bangladesh, Mexico and others. Wal-Mart is among the repeat offenders. Like other US retailers, it claims to be enforcing decent labor conditions. The investigators find otherwise. Kernaghan points out that the same companies have won enforceable rules in trade agreements to protect their trademarks, labels and copyrights, yet regard protections for workers as "an impediment to free trade." "Under this distorted sense of values," says Kernaghan, "the label is protected but not the human being, the worker who makes the product."

Antisweatshop legislation—the first of its kind—is ready to go, in the form of a bill introduced last year by Senator Byron Dorgan and Representative (now Senator) Sherrod Brown. It bars imports produced under internationally defined "sweatshop" conditions and holds companies accountable for using forced labor or denying basic human rights to workers, including the right to organize. The sweatshop measure could be amended to include well-defined terms requiring safe workplace construction, thus outlawing the conditions that lead to the factory fires that have killed thousands of young workers making garments and toys in Asia.

Free riders. As American companies move more and more of their manufacturing offshore, many take on the status of "free riders." They enjoy all the benefits of being "American"—government services and subsidies, the protection of the US military—while discarding reciprocal obligations to the country: jobs, economic investment and paying a fair share of the tax burden. The new Democratic majority proposes to repeal some of the tax incentives for moving jobs overseas, but that doesn't begin to address the scope of the deteriorating loyalty.

Congress can create a reverse incentive—higher taxation—for firms that have already moved a substantial portion of their production offshore and intend to move more. These are not marginal offenders. Microsoft has offloaded most of its manufacturing. General Electric, General Motors, Boeing and other big names are pursuing similar strategies.

A "free rider" surcharge could be enacted on top of the corporate income tax, which would raise the tax liability for firms in proportion to how much their domestic production is declining because of offshoring. By itself, the special tax wouldn't reverse the dynamics driving the process, but it would change the incentives. The measure would inform corporate executives that the "free ride" is over and that "global companies" will begin paying a rising price for abandoning loyalty to the US economy.

Cap trade deficits. Stop the hemorrhaging. "Our economy is engaged in a very dangerous game of chicken," Senator Dorgan warned last summer when he and Senator Russ Feingold introduced the Balanced Trade Restoration Act. The US trade deficits—$800 billion a year and rising—are either setting up an epic financial crisis for the United States or a pit of deepening indebtedness that will produce falling living standards for most Americans. "I'm afraid that our mountain of trade debt could come crashing down on our heads and make the stock-market collapse seem like a blip on the radar," Dorgan said.

Dorgan's legislation is the economic equivalent of "going nuclear." It would rattle the global system profoundly, because the United States has long been the willing "buyer of last resort" for world production. By issuing a limited supply of import certificates to trading companies, the government would unilaterally

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COMMENT

restrict the amount of goods brought into the country. Gradually over five years, it could correct its huge trade imbalance. This sounds "protectionist"—and forbidden by trade rules—but is actually consistent with Article 12 of the WTO charter, which authorizes nations facing a balance-of-payments crisis to invoke emergency tariffs to correct extreme problems. The use of import certificates (first proposed by investor Warren Buffett) has the same effect as tariffs but relies more on private market forces.

Other trading nations might threaten retaliation, but that's not a game they can easily win since the US market remains the largest buyer for their goods. The United States would have to accept the necessary pain of reducing its vast capital borrowing from overseas—hundreds of billions every year from China and other major exporting nations—and start living within its means. The virtue of Dorgan's measure is that it would confront the deterioration now rather than waiting for a grave crisis.

America's problems are not the whole story. The trading system itself is deeply out of whack and unstable, in need of major structural reforms that can put the entire world on a more promising path. But Dorgan figures other nations will not accept the need for such moderating changes—new international financial rules, new protections for labor and environmental rights—until they see that the United States is prepared to act on its own. If Washington does act, US multinationals would be compelled to bring some production back home, the United States would resign as buyer of last resort and major exporting economies like China would have to stimulate their own domestic consumption. These are all healthy steps toward balance and equity.

The President, of course, won't touch Dorgan's idea (he won't even mention the trade problem) and neither will most Democrats, at least at first. The political community is in the hand-wringing stage: unable to act and afraid to share the blunt truth of our condition with the public at large. The politicians need a painful jolt themselves. That is what makes Dorgan's shock therapy potentially valuable. By pushing this measure forward and threatening to demand a roll-call vote, Dorgan and his allies could force their colleagues out of denial and into inquiry and debate. Senators in both parties would find it awkward to vote against a measure that puts limits on the burgeoning trade deficits, and the roll call would be brutally clarifying for voters. Dorgan is not particularly optimistic, but he would at least like to give ordinary Americans fair warning of the reckoning that is approaching. "At the moment, there's a great yawn about all this," he told me. "But one day when everything collapses, people will ask: Why didn't we do anything about this?"

Democrats with the nerve have a chance to challenge the self-satisfied status quo and expose many of globalization's fallacies and contradictions. They will no doubt be scolded as troublemakers in the here and now, but the country will honor their courage in the long run.

WILLIAM GREIDER

CALVIN TRILLIN

GEORGE W. BUSH EXPLAINS HIS SIGNING STATEMENTS, AMONG OTHER THINGS

They sent me a law against torture.
I signed it, although it was quaint.
I said, though, that I'm the decider
Of if something's torture or ain't.

I'll do what I want when I want to,
Though Congress's will may be foiled.
I've always done just what I want to.
You see, I'm a little bit spoiled.

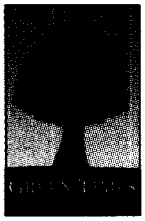
The Congress wants mail left unopened,
Except through a court. They were blunt.
I signed that, but said in a statement
We'll open whatever we want.

I'll do what I want when I want to,
That's deep down in my DNA.
I've always done just what I want to.
And Nanny Dick says it's OK.

The citizens spoke in November.
They said that my war is a flop.
So what? I will order more troops there.
I'm boss, and I'm not going to stop.

I'll do what I want when I want to,
It's what I've done all my life long.
I've always done just what I want to.
It's lucky I've never been wrong.

Mutiny for the Bounty



Humans can't live under water, so we tend to overlook the fact that most life on this planet exists not on land but in the oceans. "Oceans cover 71 percent of the earth's surface area but contain 97 percent of its livable habitat," says David Helvarg, author of *Blue Frontier: Dispatches From America's Ocean Wilderness*. Oceans provide approximately 70 percent of the oxygen that humans breathe (like plants, oceans absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen) and most of the water we drink (evaporation from oceans forms the clouds whose rain and snow fill rivers and aquifers). In evolutionary terms, adds Helvarg, humans come from the ocean—our earliest forebears crawled out of the sea eons before our immediate ancestors, the apes, began walking on two legs—which may explain why people are so drawn to it. Half the world's population lives within fifty miles

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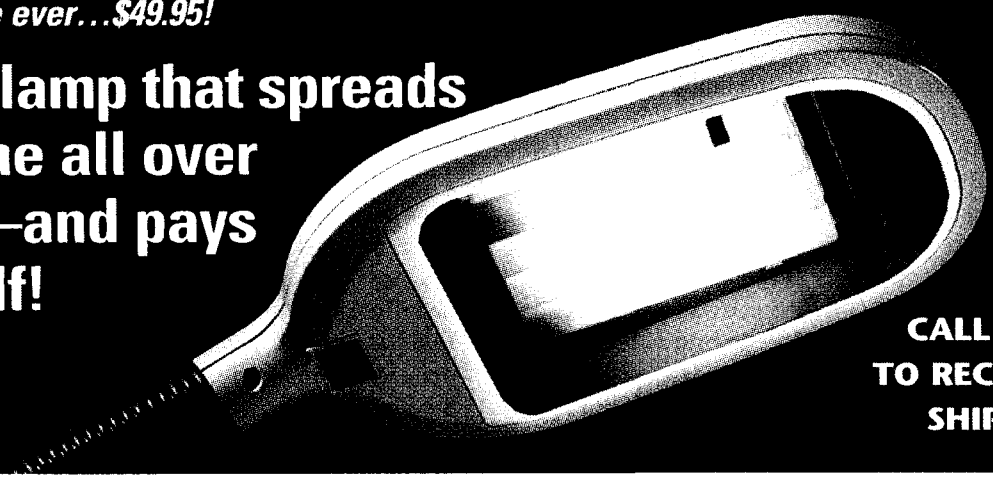

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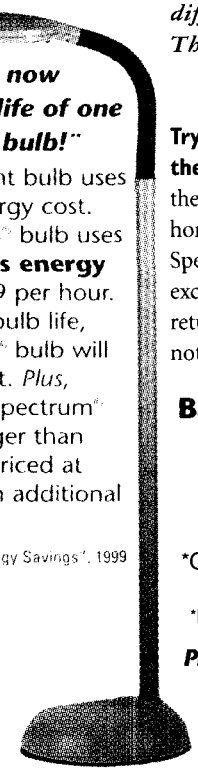
**Source: "Lighting the Way to Energy Savings", 1999



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of a coastline; going to the beach is the number-one outdoor recreational activity for Americans.

Homo sapiens could not survive without oceans, but you wouldn't know it from how we have been treating them. Climate change was the big environmental story of 2006, but the alarming state of the oceans was not far behind. Topping the list was a study published in *Science* that projected that edible sea life will completely disappear by 2048 if current trends of overfishing and pollution continue. "Our children will see a world without seafood if we don't change things," commented Boris Worm, lead author of the study, which found three years ago that 29 percent of fish and shellfish populations had collapsed. A separate report by the United Nations Environmental Program announced there are at least 200 oxygen-starved "dead zones" in the world's seas, caused by excessive runoff of fertilizers, sewage and other land-based pollution. Further worrisome evidence came from the central Pacific Ocean, where Greenpeace researchers took samples from a swarm of floating plastic that stretched across an area the size of Texas. Suspended in a stagnant vortex of currents, the plastic came primarily from mainland consumers in Asia and North America. The Los Angeles River alone flushes enough trash each year to fill the Rose Bowl two stories high, according to a superb exposé in the *Los Angeles Times*.

Perhaps most ominous, human activity is altering the very chemical composition and temperature of the oceans. Scientists blame increasing emissions of carbon dioxide. The oceans absorb much of this CO_2, which is fortunate in one sense; otherwise, the atmosphere would be heating up even faster than it already is. But the extra CO_2 is making seawater more acidic, which in turn threatens a cascade of disturbing consequences, including the destruction of coral reefs and plankton, tiny animals that are the foundation of the marine food chain.

Nevertheless, Jane Lubchenco, a professor at Oregon State University who ranks among the most distinguished oceanographers in the world, sees reasons for hope. "We're seeing the early stages of a mutiny for the bounty, if you will," she says. "There is increasing awareness that the historic bounty of oceans is quickly disappearing but also that there's still time to reverse the degradation."

One sign of this incipient mutiny, says Lubchenco, is the similarity of recommendations made by two recent US blue-ribbon commissions on the oceans. The Pew Oceans Commission, on which Lubchenco served, was tilted toward the advocacy side of the debate; the US Commission on Ocean Policy, created by Congress, reflected establishment views. (They have since merged to form a joint commission.) But both diagnosed the state of the oceans as dire and recommended an overhaul of American policy—putting science first, respecting environmental limits and rationalizing government oversight. Current policy is schizophrenic, Lubchenco says: "Fisheries policy is handled by one agency, coastal development by another, water quality by yet another, habitat protection by still another, making it impossible to apply the holistic approach needed to foster resilient, healthy ecosystems." Both commissions urged passage of a comprehensive law on oceans—"like the Clean Air Act," says Helvarg—that would create a single entity to coordinate all federal policy on oceans and interact with state governments. The cost of the recommended reforms is relatively small: $3 billion to $4 billion a year—about what the United States spends every two weeks fighting the Iraq War.

So far, Congress and the Bush Administration have done little in response, earning a D+ on a Joint Ocean Commission Initiative report card last February. Since then, critics say, only incremental progress has been made, despite two high-profile initiatives: President Bush's creation of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument, a Montana-sized reserve of mainly open water, and Congress's reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, which governs fisheries policy.

Nancy Knowlton, director of the Center for Marine Biodiversity and Conservation at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, welcomed the Hawaii reserve but noted that it was a relatively easy step to take: The area is so remote that there is almost no commercial fishing there. "What we really need is to declare 20 percent of the world's oceans no-take zones," she says. "And we're nowhere near that." The other priority, Knowlton says, is to "get serious about global warming," an imperative conspicuously omitted from both commissions' policy recommendations.

Laura Cantral, a spokeswoman for the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, praised the reform of Magnuson-Stevens for "enhancing the role of science" and "setting a clear deadline for ending overfishing." But environmentalists complain that the act's rhetoric is undermined by weak enforcement mechanisms. "We need to treat the ocean as what it is—an interrelated web of living organisms, rather than a seafood production factory," says Michael Hirshfield, chief scientist at the group Oceana.

The new Congress is more environmentally friendly. It seems likely to pass the long-pending treaty on the Law of the Sea, which is favored by everyone from environmentalists to the fishing industry to the State Department but was blocked from a Senate vote by far-right opponents. Congress will also have a chance to emulate the best ocean policy in the nation, which, as usual in matters environmental, is found in California. Barbara Boxer, chair of the Senate Environment Committee, has promised to introduce a bill based on the California Ocean Protection Act.

But it will take much more than sensible legislation in the United States to restore the world's ravaged ocean ecosystems. (US ocean policy is actually more progressive than that of most other nations, a refreshing change.) Dead zones cannot recover until agricultural systems worldwide abandon massive dependence on chemical fertilizers. The plastic vortex swirling in the central Pacific will keep growing until the throwaway culture that has taken hold in rich and poor countries alike is overturned. And no individual reforms will matter much if global warming isn't reversed very soon. The oceans are too vast and mighty for humans to kill, but we have proven ourselves quite capable of poisoning, overfishing and heating them to a perilous degree. The question is not whether oceans can survive what humans are doing to them but whether humans can. MARK HERTSGAARD

Mark Hertsgaard, The Nation*'s environment correspondent, is the author most recently of* Earth Odyssey: Around the World in Search of Our Environmental Future *and* The Eagle's Shadow: Why America Fascinates and Infuriates the World. *He is a Nation Institute fellow.*

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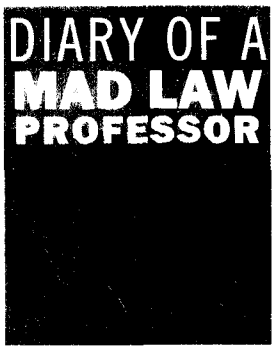
Zero and Infinity



It is an odd convergence that has haunted the past few weeks—that trio of deaths, President Gerald Ford, James Brown and Saddam Hussein—suspended between Christmas and New Year's, an eerily bright full moon overhead. There was something trancelike about the weeklong circling of caissons, the sequence of funerals: three very subdued proceedings for Ford, three over-the-top ones for Brown and no visible ceremony at all for Saddam, just the loud mocking of hooded executioners as he was flung to swing hanging in the darkness of a deep pit.

I'm bothered by that feeling of trance; there is something rather numb inside me at the moment, something that does not know how to reconcile all the degrees of separation among these three lives, these three deaths. The rituals of respect or disrespect accorded to each of these symbolic figurations—the decent and forgiving man, the proud and loud man, the bad man—represent a spectrum of who we are as Americans. The most complicated of these is clearly the death of Saddam Hussein, which, while not officially ordered by our government, is nonetheless the terrible denouement of one fantastically wrongheaded decision after another on the part of the Bush Administration. The death of Saddam, with its timing on a Sunni holy day and its casual volley of catcalled humiliation, seemed almost calculated to turn a tyrant into a martyr.

Let me state what ought to be obvious: I am not defending Saddam Hussein's murderous past. When serial killer Ted Bundy was executed years ago, most Americans experienced a jolt of revulsion upon seeing small crowds gathered outside the prison to picnic and hold up signs rejoicing in his death. Sixteen years later, when pictures of Saddam's corpse were replayed endlessly on Fox to the accompaniment of the unbridled exultation of its shock jocks, how sad to see a majority of Americans passively insuring Fox's high ratings by watching this ghoulish spectacle. Is there not an ugly resonance with the postcards of public lynchings that used to be circulated during the time of Jim Crow?

While in these doldrums, I received holiday greetings from an old friend and law school classmate, Cynthia Cannady, who expressed perfectly the apprehension I was having trouble putting into words. Her letter helped me pinpoint the way sensationalism actually dulls our capacity to feel at all.

"I have to express my views on the recent events in Iraq," she wrote. "In recent months, even *Newsweek* used the term 'ethnic cleansing' to describe the killings of Sunnis by death squads linked to the Iraqi government, especially the Interior Ministry. The number of Iraqis killed since the beginning of this invasion is upward of 650,000. Every day there are new reports of civilians kidnapped and killed, by men often using official cars and in government uniforms. News reports tell us that there is a conscious policy of killing Sunnis because of their organized resistance to the Maliki government, with professors and professionals the frequent targets. Ethnic cleansing! Who installed this government?

"Now we see the grisly reports of Saddam Hussein's execution after a deeply flawed trial during which three of his defense counsel were assassinated, and the judge was changed three times because the first two judges apparently did not find the process acceptable. CNN and Fox broadcast the opinions of various legal and political 'experts' who implied that of course the trial was fair by Middle Eastern standards, that this is the 'justice' Saddam 'deserves.' Does that mean that some wrongdoers get a higher order of justice, whereas others can simply be tried by hearsay, their lawyers picked off by assassins, in a court run by judges who are literal extensions of the political branch?

"But this is not all that is making me so sad as we close this new year. It is that we have become so sedated, so obsessed, so afraid that we cannot question. It is not acceptable to speak out, or even to cry out. We are being systematically dehumanized by endlessly watching the hangmen in hoods pushing Saddam Hussein to the gallows. One can only wonder why it was so important to kill Saddam right around the time when the number of US troops killed in action reached 3,000. Or why the killing took place so soon after the release of the Baker Report, when Bush was pushing for a 'surge' in troop levels for reasons that are far from clearly defined.

"The extra elite shopping center here in Palo Alto is in its post-Christmas glory. I went shopping and bought too many clothes. Lost in the music and colors and textures, I felt joy and pleasure. Then I remembered, and the images of death and destruction revisited me. What has happened to us is terrible. We have become insensate. Before we can start anew, we have to want to see what is happening and claim American ideals as our own. We have to stop talking only about mortgages and movies, interest rates and insider trading, SUVs and iPods. We have to start engaging with the difficult matter of political murder. When Ceausescu and his wife were dragged out into the street in Bucharest and shot, did we think that was OK? Are we any different from the mobs that cheered when Marie Antoinette was dragged into the Place de la Concorde and decapitated? Is it all right for us to use agents to kill the former President of Iraq, however wrong he was? Do we think that news clips showing hooded men putting a big rope around Saddam Hussein's neck is consistent with *our* humanity?

"What has happened to us is a violation of our being. And we do not even seem to know it. Yes, there are numberless victims in Iraq. But we are victims, too. What is being killed is our ability to care about what happens to other people. We think we can just go on with our private lives, but we can't take back what we have purchased.

"I wish us all a new year filled with happiness, but also with the ability to grow older wisely, including seeing clearly the violence and death that is with us at this moment. My illusions are gone, but my hope is not." ■

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ERIC ALTERMAN

Iraq and the Sin of Good Judgment

The Bush/Cheney war in Iraq has proven to be even more catastrophic than those who had the good sense to oppose it could have predicted. It has killed Americans and Iraqis, destroyed a functioning, albeit unfree nation, increased the threat of terrorism, destabilized the region, empowered our enemies—particularly Iran and Syria—inspired hatred of the United States across the globe and will ultimately cost American taxpayers upwards of a trillion dollars. It is, almost certainly, as Al Gore has noted, "the worst strategic mistake in the entire history of the United States."

The problem the war creates for the punditocracy and the rest of the political establishment is twofold. First, the leaders they backed have not only been wildly incompetent but also impervious to reality. Offered a face-saving exit by the Baker Commission, Bush, Cheney & Co. prefer instead to double down on disaster. Second, there is the problem of the pundits' individual reputations. If William Kristol, Charles Krauthammer, Lawrence Kaplan and David Brooks et al. are so smart, why were they so wrong about something so crucial? And why, given their sorry records, do they and their editors still think anybody ought to keep listening to them? At the very least, those they misled are entitled to an explanation.

Even those who have offered up their mea culpas have often sought refuge in what *The American Prospect*'s Sam Rosenfeld and Matt Yglesias have aptly termed "The Incompetence Dodge." Almost all the most prominent prowar neocons featured in *Vanity Fair*'s recent report, for example, blamed the Bush Administration for failing to execute its beautiful war plans more efficiently.

Accompanying this tactic has been a corollary effort to smear the liberals who got it right rather than renounce the calumny that was heaped on their heads during the run-up to the invasion (from "pacifist" and "isolationist" to "anti-American" and even "pro-terrorist"). I first noticed this tendency when, in June 2005, Thomas Friedman, the *New York Times*'s extraordinarily influential foreign affairs columnist whose analysis of the war proved completely misguided, accused liberals of "deep down" wanting America to fail in Iraq "because, with a few exceptions...they thought the war was wrong." He presented no supporting evidence and named no names. More recently, *Time*'s McCarthyite columnist Joe Klein explained that in "listening to leftists...it's easy to assume that they are rooting for an American failure." Andrew Sullivan has opined that antiwar liberals were "objectively pro-Saddam." *Slate* editor Jacob Weisberg dismissed those whose analysis proved correct as "the isolationist left," as if idiotic wars were the only means this great country has to engage the rest of the world.

The purest embodiment of this tendency, perhaps, is a recent screed by Roger Cohen, formerly the foreign editor of the *Times*, now the editor at large of the *International Herald Tribune*, author of the "Globalist" column and international writer at large for the *Times*. According to Cohen, writing in the *IHT* and on the *Times* website, the people who tried to save America and the world from the horrific catastrophe we must now endure are nothing but "hyperventilating left-liberals [whose] hatred of Bush is so intense that rational argument usually goes out the window." We are "so convinced that the Iraq invasion was no more than an American grab for oil and military bases...[we] have forgotten the myriad crimes of Saddam Hussein." We are "America-hating, over-the-top rant[ers] of the left—the kind that equates Guantánamo with the Gulag and holds that the real threat to human rights comes from the White House rather than Al Qaeda." And for good measure, we also "equate the conservative leadership of a great democracy with dictatorship."

To support these amazing charges, Cohen quotes exactly one person: Scottish MP George Galloway, last seen making an ass of himself on the reality TV show for washed-up gossip fodder, *Celebrity Big Brother*. Galloway, who was thrown out of the Labour Party, can be said to represent the "left-liberals" here and abroad about as well as, say, ex-KKK Grand Wizard and Holocaust denier David Duke represents the right.

Naturally curious about the actual evil-doers he had in mind, I e-mailed Cohen and politely asked for specifics. He was on vacation with his family and replied by BlackBerry that he would not be able to respond. A few minutes later, however, he apparently changed his mind and replied with a lengthy and rather hostile set of questions regarding my own views on Iraq, including: "What makes you think you can express an informed opinion...?"

The same Cohen column that inveighed against Bush-bashers contained an endorsement of what he called "an expression of moderate sanity," a document titled "American Liberalism and the Euston Manifesto," which, he explained, "precisely because of its sanity...has received too little attention." Cohen celebrates this manifesto—which, naturally, embraces the incompetence dodge—as an alternative to "sterile screaming in the wilderness, tired of the comfortably ensconced 'hindsighters' poring over every American error in Iraq, tired of facile anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism masquerading as anti-Zionism."

Again, on the identities of these "hindsighters," "screamers," anti-Americans and anti-Semites "masquerading as anti-Zionists," Cohen was silent. Had he taken a look at the 232 manifesto signatories, meanwhile, he'd have had trouble identifying more than three, counting generously, actual liberals. The roll is dominated by the likes of Walter Laqueur, Martin Peretz, Ronald Radosh and, I kid you not, Iran/*contra* adventurer Michael Ledeen.

So what's the point of the exercise? Simple: Again, it is to discredit those on the left who were right about Bush and Iraq and remain so today. Shortly after the invasion, Bill Kristol tried to smear war opponents as "the Dominique de Villepin left." Today such smears ought to be a badge of honor. There are few forces so powerful as the will to evade responsibility for one's mistakes. Too bad it's our brave young soldiers who must die for them. ■

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ARTICLES

NEWSPAPERS ...AND AFTER?

by John Nichols

As the November 7 election approached, Jon Tester was getting hit with the full force of Karl Rove's still considerable arsenal. The White House political czar had decided that the way to maintain Republican control of the Senate was to concentrate GOP resources on traditionally "red" states like Montana, where Tester, an organic farmer and state senator, was mounting a populist campaign against scandal-plagued Republican incumbent Conrad Burns. The airwaves filled with attack ads that savaged the Democrat for criticizing the Patriot Act and declared, "Tester is backed by radicals." Former Department of Homeland Security chief Tom Ridge described Tester's championship of civil liberties as "unfathomable, almost inexplicable." Vice President Cheney arrived to paint the Burns-Tester race as a test of "whether this government will remain strong and resolute on the war on terror or falls into confusion, doubts and indecision." President Bush, who carried Montana by twenty points in 2004, showed up to close the deal, as some pundits began to predict a Burns comeback.

Tester, a darling of liberal bloggers, was not going to be saved by flaming posts now. He needed a trusted Montana voice, or better yet a chorus of voices, to come to his defense. As election day approached, he got it. The daily newspapers of the Big Sky State came out, one after another, with endorsements of the challenger. Conrad Burns may have had the President and the Vice President singing his praises, but the *Helena Independent Record*, the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, the *Great Falls Tribune*, the *Montana Standard* and the *Billings Gazette* were telling Montana voters that Jon Tester was one of their own, and that he belonged in the Senate. The Tester camp scrambled on the last Sunday of the campaign to get the word out, sending e-mails that urged supporters to print out a hastily assembled leaflet highlighting the endorsements to pass along to friends, slip under doors and post on grocery store bulletin boards.

Two days later, Tester bested Burns by about 2,800 votes. How did Tester beat back the full-court press of the Bush White House? Before the election, a local conservative commentator had tried to argue that the newspaper endorsements were no more influential than "visits of luminaries or stars or political mucky-mucks coming in from the national scene," while a prince of the blogosphere, Daily Kos founder Markos Moulitsas, had posted his prediction that the hometown endorsements would still carry weight in Montana. Daily Kos was right. When the votes were counted, it could fairly be argued—and indeed it was—that endorsements from local papers had tipped the seat to Tester and the Senate to the Democrats.

Newspapers may be the dinosaurs of America's new-media age, hulking behemoths that cost too much to prepare and distribute and that cannot seem to attract young—or even middle-aged—readers in the numbers needed to survive. They may well have entered the death spiral that Philip Meyer, in his recent book *The Vanishing Newspaper*, predicts will conclude one day in 2043 as the last reader throws aside the final copy of a newspaper. But, as the Tester win illustrates, the dinosaurs still have enough life in them to guide—and perhaps even define—our politics.

Especially at the local and state levels, where the fundamental fights for control of a nation less red and blue than complexly purple play out, daily newspapers remain essential arbiters of what passes for news and what Americans think about it. For all the talk about television's dominant role in campaigns (less and less because of its importance as a source of news for most Americans, more and more because of campaign commercials) and all the new attention to the Internet, newspapers for the most part continue to establish the parameters of what gets covered and how. Moreover, neither broadcast nor digital

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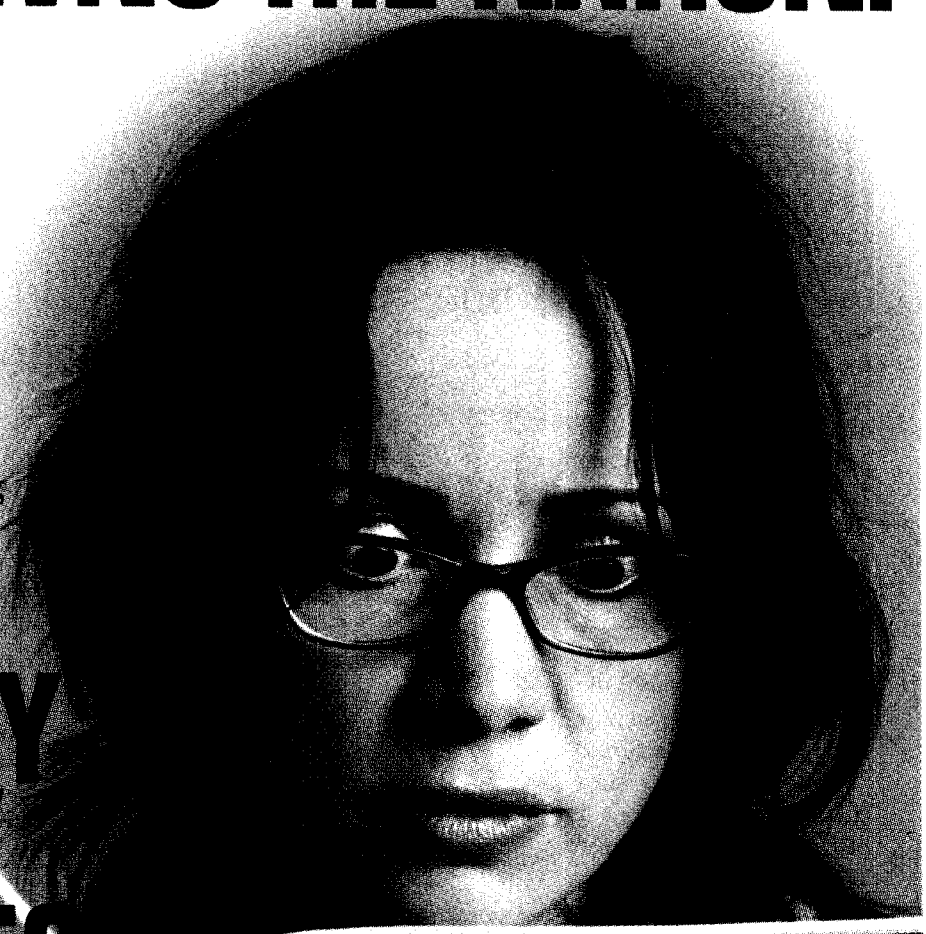
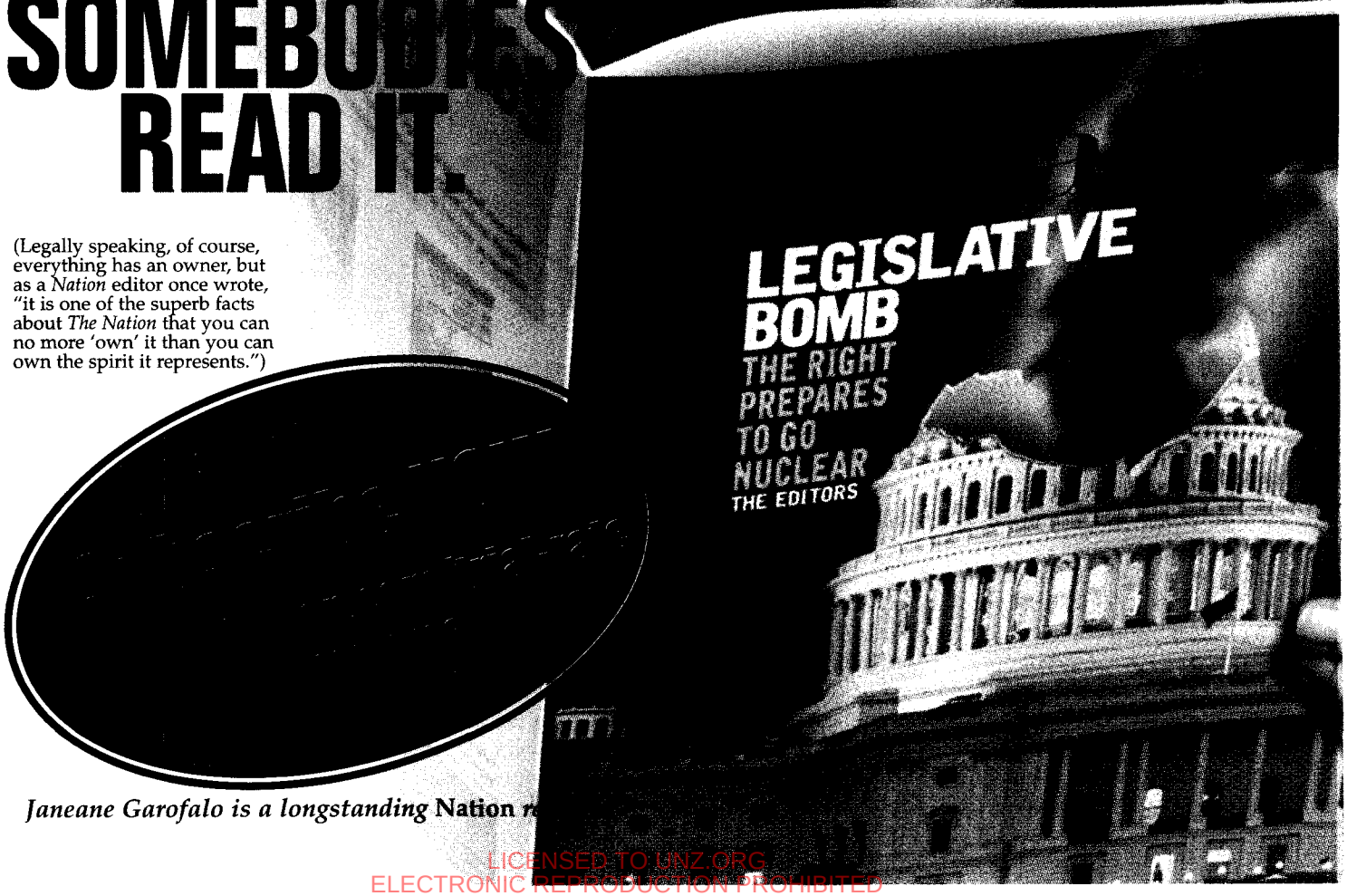


THAT'S WHY SO MANY SOMEBODIES READ IT.

(Legally speaking, of course, everything has an owner, but as a *Nation* editor once wrote, "it is one of the superb facts about *The Nation* that you can no more 'own' it than you can own the spirit it represents.")



Janeane Garofalo is a longstanding **Nation** *r*

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media have developed the reporting infrastructure or the level of credibility that newspapers enjoy. So candidates for the House, the Senate and even the White House still troop into old gray buildings in Denver and Omaha, Louisville and Boston, Concord and Des Moines in search of a forum where they can talk with reporters and editors about issues and where those conversations will, they hope, be distilled into articles and editorials that set so much of the agenda for the political debate at the local, state and national levels.

Thus, while George W. Bush may say he rarely reads newspapers, he sat down in 2000 and 2004 to talk with individual newspaper publishers and editors in hopes of winning the support of publications in such battleground states as Pennsylvania and Ohio. So did Al Gore and John Kerry. And Illinois Senator Barack Obama, a newspaper junkie, is busily making the rounds as he ponders a bid for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination. The attention on news pages and support on editorial pages that newspapers can provide is even more important for candidates trying to elbow their way into the competition by raising new issues.

US newspaper circulation is roughly the same today as it was in 1950, but the number of households has more than doubled.

Former Senator John Edwards learned this three years ago, after a *Des Moines Register* endorsement focused on his ideas about the disturbing development of "two Americas" and ignited his campaign in Iowa's Democratic presidential caucuses. "We were talking about issues, such as poverty, that didn't necessarily lend themselves to soundbites," explained Edwards, who said his campaign, which eventually finished a solid second in the caucuses, experienced a "massive upsurge" after receiving the endorsement. "When a newspaper that people know says, 'Hey, people should be paying attention to what this guy is saying,' it makes a huge difference."

And it's not only in the heat of a campaign that newspapers help set the agenda. Consider, for example, the *Chicago Tribune*'s relentless focus on the injustice of the death penalty, which led a Republican governor to declare a moratorium on executions in Illinois six years ago and, ultimately, to clear death row. Groundbreaking revelations regarding the disputed 2000 presidential election in Florida were uncovered by the *Orlando Sentinel* and the *St. Petersburg Times*. And while there is no question that bloggers raised the alarm about Diebold's dubious voting machines before the 2004 election, newspapers were dramatically more aggressive in picking up on concerns about paperless ballots and election abuses than TV networks or local stations during the 2006 campaign.

This is not to suggest that most newspapers do their journalism as well or as wisely as they should, nor that the role of newspapers is still as vital as it was in the 1950s, when President Dwight Eisenhower, worried about the financial difficulties of the New York *Herald Tribune*, personally wrote millionaire John Hay Whitney and urged him to take charge of the publication because, he argued, it had a "great and valuable function to perform for the future of America." But newspapers remain necessary, at least for now. Unfortunately, necessity does not translate to the sort of profits that contemporary newspaper owners demand—nor to any assurance of the long-term survival of journalism as we know and need it.

Crises like that of the *Herald Tribune* a half-century ago are now the norm rather than the exception. The newspaper industry is in trouble. Big trouble. In 1950 newspapers in the United States had a weekday circulation of 54 million. The circulation figures are roughly the same today, but the number of households has more than doubled. The *Los Angeles Times*'s daily circulation was down 8 percent in a single six-month period in 2006, while the *Philadelphia Inquirer* was down 7.5 percent, the *Boston Globe* 6.7 percent, the *New York Times* 3.5 percent and the *Washington Post* 3.3 percent.

With drops in circulation have come declines in revenues—not because subscriptions provide all that much money but because media companies collect money from advertisers based on the number of homes they reach. Big advertisers long ago began shifting from the printed page to television, but now classified advertising, the meat-and-potatoes of local and regional daily newspapers, has begun migrating at dramatic speed to websites like craigslist.

What's happening is not just a temporary downturn. From 1990, when newspaper circulation peaked at 62.3 million, readership has been in steady decline. That might lead some to the casual conclusion that the Internet is the problem. But as veteran journalist and media writer Ben Compaine explains, "The heyday of newspapers was in the late nineteenth century, as expanding literacy combined with the development of the steam-driven rotary press, a market economy and wood pulp–based newsprint to make the mass-circulation penny press possible. From the mid-1800s to the 1920s, newspapers were the only mass-circulation daily news and information medium in the media barnyard. That changed with radio. It accelerated with television. The Internet is just the latest information technology that has added to the choices that consumers and advertisers have for obtaining and creating information." All true, but there is powerful evidence that the breaking point for newspapers may finally be coming.

Individual owners and powerful families—who often, though by no means always, settled for reasonable profits in return for the ego boost that went with putting out a quality newspaper—are exiting the stage. Increasingly newspapers are owned by the shareholders of national chains, who do not even know—let alone care about—the names of the papers from which they demand profit margins that are generally twice the average for other industries. Where a local family might have grudgingly accepted a weak quarter and a downturn in revenues, shareholders greet any softness on the bottom line with demands for draconian cuts. If a paper's current managers are unwilling to make them, investors look for more ruthless managers. Investors forced the breakup and sale, in 2006, of the venerable Knight Ridder chain, which owned Pulitzer Prize–winning newspapers like the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *San Jose Mercury News* and the *Miami Herald*. Similar pressures have forced the Tribune Company, which pub-

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lishes the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Hartford Courant* and several Florida dailies, to put itself on the block.

In recent months, Morgan Stanley has been pressuring the New York Times Company to alter its voting structure to reduce the influence of the Sulzberger family, which has opted for reasonably high—if often imperfect—journalistic standards over unreasonably high profits. The company's "current corporate governance practices deviate from what is widely considered to be best practice," explained Morgan Stanley Investment Management, owner of almost 8 percent of the Times stock, in asking shareholders to vote at this April's annual meeting in favor of its plan. The Sulzbergers shot back with a statement that the family "has no intention of opening our doors to the kind of action that is tearing at the heart of some of the other great journalistic institutions in our country." But the bosses at Knight Ridder once said much the same thing, and even if the Sulzbergers do manage to maintain one major newspaper in something like its current form, their statement is an acknowledgment that the broader trends are in the wrong direction.

How wrong? Under apparent pressure from Wall Street, the McClatchy chain just sold off what would normally have been a crown jewel among its holdings, the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, at a rock-bottom price—less than half the $1.2 billion it paid for the largest paper in Minnesota eight years ago. "It was a drag on the bottom line, and we felt we would do better without it," declared McClatchy CEO Gary Pruitt. The new owner, a private-equity firm that owns no other newspapers, is not expected to raise journalistic standards—even if the new overseers claim they'll maintain the *Star Tribune* as the great regional daily it has been for decades. "These buyers aren't in it for the love of journalism, or even for the influence that you get by buying a local paper," argues John Morton, dean of newspaper ownership analysts. "They are in it to make a profit by flipping the paper in five or six years, and the way to do that usually involves a lot of cutting in the meantime."

'Newspapers were once thought to bring communities together. That's not the case anymore.' —Professor emeritus Ed Herman

The *Times*, the *Star Tribune* and other great newspapers are not going to collapse soon. But their circumstances are evidence of the rapid, and often dire, changes transforming American newspapering into something less than it has been. Owners are moving to satisfy investors by slashing newsroom staff, pressuring unions to accept cuts, dumbing down coverage of important issues, eliminating statehouse, Washington and foreign bureaus (even the *Wall Street Journal* is getting into the act, with the recent shuttering of its Canada bureau) and generally sucking the life out of what were once considered public trusts—or by selling out to firms that will do the same thing.

The result has been a hemorrhaging of journalism jobs, as reporters and editors join manufacturing workers in the ranks of "disposable Americans." More than 44,000 news industry employees, at least 34,000 of them newspaper journalists, have lost their jobs over the past five years. Roughly 200 jobs have been cut at the *Chicago Tribune* over the past year. The *Akron Beacon Journal*, a Pulitzer Prize–winning Ohio daily that once set the standard in the state for investigative journalism, has slashed newsroom jobs by 25 percent. The *San Jose Mercury News* is in the process of shedding 17 percent of its newsroom positions. And deep cuts are being implemented in Denver, Pittsburgh, St. Paul, Philadelphia and dozens of smaller cities where traditional beats—labor, farm, federal courts—are disappearing as retiring reporters are not replaced.

The Project for Excellence in Journalism's current report on "The State of the News Media" notes, "In some cities, the numbers alone tell the story. There are roughly half as many reporters covering metropolitan Philadelphia, for instance, as in 1980. The number of newspaper reporters there has fallen from 500 to 220. The pattern at the suburban papers around the city has been similar, though not as extreme. The local TV stations, with the exception of Fox, have cut back on traditional news coverage. The five AM radio stations that used to cover news have been reduced to two. As recently as 1990, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* had 46 reporters covering the city. Today it has 24."

What that translates to is this: If we assume that *Inquirer* reporters work normal schedules, there are substantial portions of any given week when fewer than five journalists provide the primary coverage for a city of 1.4 million people. Major news stories are going untold. Vast stretches of a metropolis are being neglected. And the reporter-to-population ratio will soon worsen, as plans are implemented to cut up to 17 percent of remaining editorial jobs. More significant, as Ed Herman, professor emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and an expert not just on the media but on Philadelphia, told me last year, the sense of civic connection that should be nurtured by a great newspaper is instead fraying. "Newspapers were once thought to bring communities together. That's not the case anymore," he said, explaining, "People aren't stupid. They recognize when their local newspaper loses interest in them as anything but consumers of advertisements."

It is the recognition of what is being lost that has inspired journalists to begin speaking up and getting active in ways that have not been seen since media unions began to organize in the 1930s. The Newspaper Guild and its parent union, the Communications Workers of America, organized a Day of Action on December 11 to draw attention to the fact that cuts, often seen only in isolation, add up to a crisis not just for journalism but for the political and governmental processes of the nation. "That's why we're asking the public to join us—for democracy's sake—to say no to cutting the jobs of journalists and all workers whose work supports good journalism," explained Guild president Linda Foley.

Syndicated columnist Molly Ivins puts it best when she says that newspapers aren't dying but committing suicide. "What really pisses me off," she told the journal of the newspaper industry, *Editor & Publisher*, is "this most remarkable business plan: Newspaper owners look at one another and say, 'Our rate of return is slipping a bit; let's solve that problem by making our product smaller and less helpful and less interesting.'" If there has been a model of American newspaper innovation in the past

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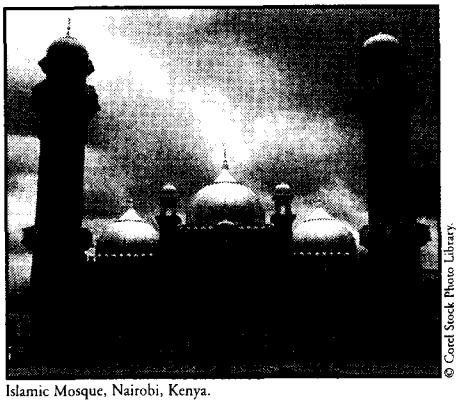

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Islamic Mosque, Nairobi, Kenya.

About Your Professor

Dr. Esposito is Editor-in-Chief of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, The Oxford History of Islam,* and *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam.* He has more than 25 books to his credit. An international consultant, he is Professor of Religion and International Affairs and of Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, Washington, DC. He specializes in Islam, political Islam, and the impact of Islamic movements from North Africa to Southeast Asia.

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three decades, it's this: Never do something bold, edgy or intelligent when there is a predictable and useless gimmick into which energy and resources can be dumped for a few years.

At the same time, newspaper owners have poured resources into lobbying for federal policy shifts that would allow them to merge with competitors and create one-newsroom towns. The Newspaper Association of America and industry lobbyists have been pushing for years for the elimination of the Federal Communications Commission's newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership ban, which prohibits ownership by a single firm of a newspaper and television and radio stations in the same market. Newspaper owners argue that with the ban lifted, they could cut costs by having the same journalists produce online and print reports and appear on company-owned radio and TV news programs. In the few cities where the cross-ownership model has been tried, however, there is no evidence to suggest that it produces better journalism or a more informed public. Instead it makes the few remaining reporters busier, leaving them with less time for what *Washington Post* veteran and Pulitzer Prize–winner David Maraniss says is the most important work of journalism: thinking.

As flawed as newspapers may be, says journalist David Maraniss, 'we don't have another vehicle ...that picks up where newspapers leave off.'

Left to their own devices, the current owners of American newspapers are indeed likely to consummate the suicide pact they have entered into with their investors. That should scare the hell out of Americans who recognize that Jefferson was right when he said that good journalism is essential to democracy. It should also get citizens asking the right questions: If newspapers really are fading away, what comes next? And in this period of transition, how do we assure that the vital role that newspapers still play is not lost? As sad as the end of newspapers might be for someone like me, who began writing at age 11 for the weekly newspaper in my Wisconsin hometown, the important question for the great mass of Americans is not, How do we save newspapers? It's, How do we still get a healthy mix of reported news and analysis from a variety of at least reasonably reliable sources?

Local television stations, identified by a majority of citizens as their primary source of news about civic life, are actually covering less political news than they did a decade ago. A new survey of the coverage of the 2006 election season, conducted by University of Wisconsin researchers, established that "local television news viewers got considerably more information about campaigns from paid political advertisements than from actual news coverage." The survey also said that "Local newscasts in seven Midwest markets aired four minutes, 24 seconds of paid political ads during the typical 30-minute broadcast [before the election] while dedicating an average of one minute, 43 seconds to election news coverage."

The Internet certainly devotes more attention to politics. But, for the most part, the information discussed is still gathered by newspaper reporters, and while a few high-profile journalists have begun to migrate from old-fashioned newsrooms to the blogosphere, they tend to arrive as commentators rather than gatherers of news. The web has yet to emerge as a distinct journalistic force—let alone one that speaks with the authority at the local, state or regional level of a traditional daily newspaper. While the web may someday be home to sites that generate the revenues needed to pay reporters and editors to produce meaningful journalism, that day has yet to arrive in any real sense.

"What is really frightening is that newspapers appear to be dying so quickly that they may disappear, or at least disappear as a serious part of our lives, before we have a replacement for them. That's a grave danger to democracy," says Maraniss. "As flawed as journalism as practiced by newspapers is, we don't have another vehicle for journalism that picks up where newspapers leave off. That's what we should be worried about. Maybe newspapers can be replaced, probably newspapers can be replaced. But journalism can't be replaced—not if we're going to function as any kind of democracy."

European and Asian media owners have been a good deal more creative and aggressive in their response to the changing circumstances of newspapers. And in many cases, though certainly not all, they have been more successful than their American counterparts in maintaining the popular appeal of print publications. European publishers have, for instance, been far more willing to invest in radical redesigns of papers and new printing and distribution systems. And they have long recognized something that is close to unimaginable to those who guide American newspapering: that taking strong front-page stands on issues such as the genetic modification of food and global warming—becoming what the British refer to as a "campaigning newspaper"—does not inspire charges of bias but instead draws readers to groundbreaking journalism.

While the *Chicago Tribune* surely gets high marks for its attention to the death penalty issue, newspapers like Britain's *Independent* embark on dozens of campaigns in the course of a year—even going so far as to give their front pages over to promotions of rallies and protest marches against everything from poverty in Africa to the war in Iraq. But it's not just that European publishers are more engaged and adventurous. European citizens and their governments have a tradition of taking seriously the role newspaper journalism plays in building a civil and democratic society.

In Norway, Sweden and Finland, where Internet use is high and strong public broadcasting systems provide sound radio and TV alternatives, newspapers are in a dramatically better position than in the United States—in part because of long-standing government commitments to encourage competition, diversity and quality. In Norway, for instance, the Media Authority, an administrative body within the country's cultural affairs ministry, uses public subsidies to encourage the development of local newspapers that compete with bigger established papers. The program promotes the development of newspapers in sparsely populated regions and helps sustain publications that may have an ideological following but are not necessarily popular with advertisers. The system is strictly controlled to avoid government censorship or pressures on publishers—in fact, the

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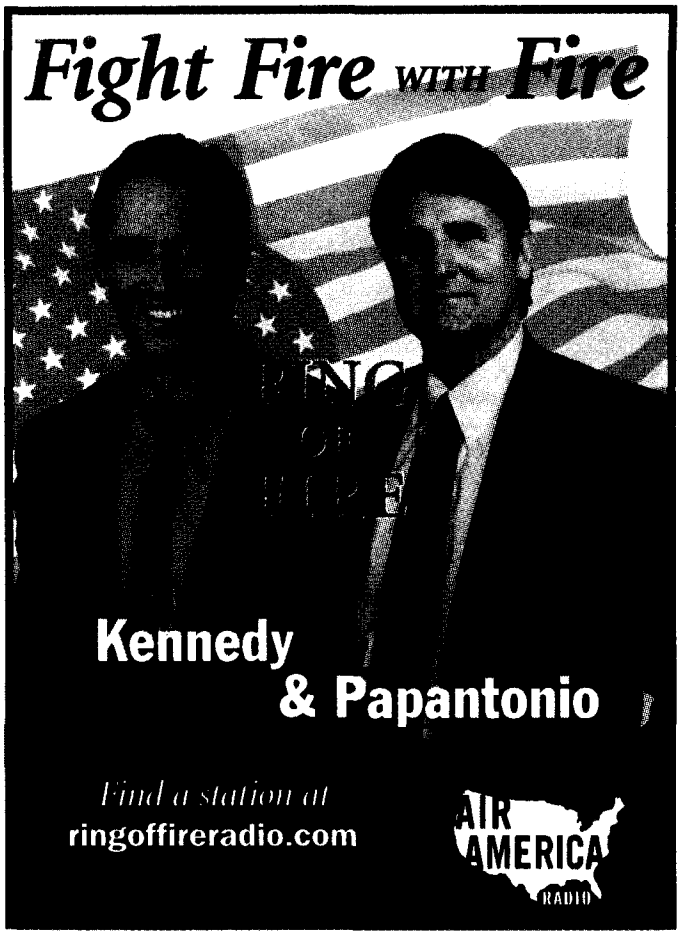
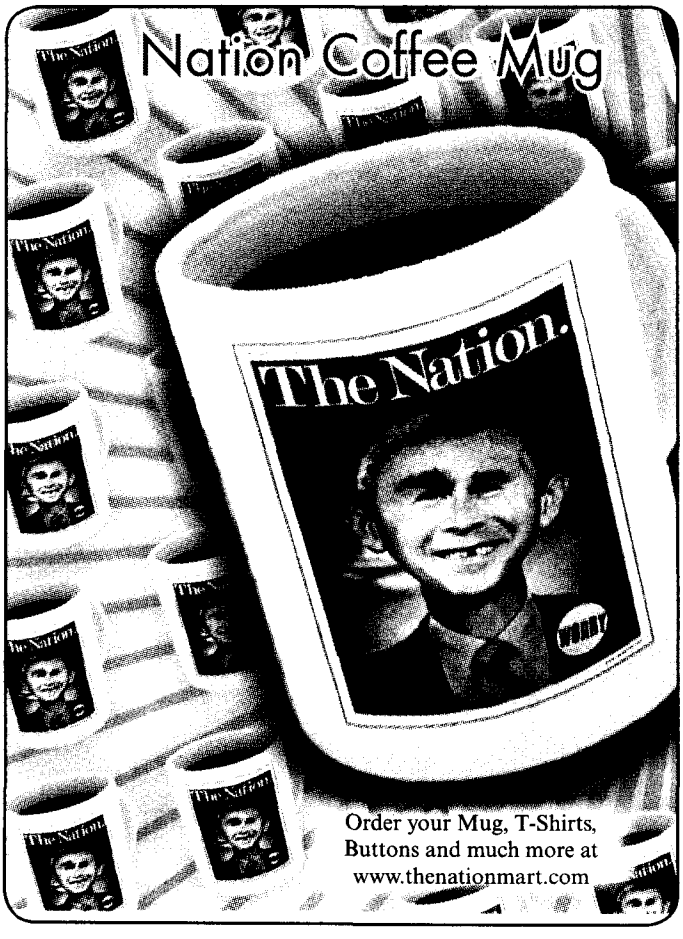
joke goes that the best way to get government assistance is to start an opposition newspaper. Even large newspapers that have little or no need for the subsidies are influenced by the system, as they find themselves in competition with papers that push the journalistic envelope. The basic requirements to qualify for subsidies provide encouragement to newspapers to invest in journalism. At the same time, key subsidies are not available to newspapers owned by companies that pay stock dividends—a restriction that prevents investors from cashing in on the public largesse.

One byproduct of the Scandinavian commitment to newspapers, especially in Norway, has been the development of some of the finest news-oriented Internet sites in the world. If newspapers do eventually slide out of existence, the strength of these websites offers encouraging evidence that journalism will survive. Norway's Schibsted newspaper firm now earns 35 percent of its operating profits from Internet ventures that have built on the reputation of its newspapers to develop the most-visited news websites in Scandinavia. Another Scandinavian publishing house, Orkla Media, owns what is frequently referred to as one of the world's most successful web-only newspapers, Germany's Netzeitung. "It's not a blog, a search engine or an aggregator," explains web journalism consultant Jeff Jarvis in an enthusiastic review of the initiative. "It is a newspaper without the paper, but with 60 journalists reporting the news. Netzeitung has not only survived the Internet bubble and a ping-pong game of corporate sales, it has acquired other media properties; it is starting an ambitious effort in networked journalism with citizen reporters; and it is set to be profitable [in the near term]."

The point here is not to portray subsidy programs as a panacea. While they seem to have worked well in Norway and a few other countries, their track record in countries like Italy is decidedly more mixed. The lesson from the rest of the world isn't that the United States ought to set up a particular program of subsidies—or borrow any other individual idea. It's that government can in the right circumstances and with the right intentions play a useful role in stabilizing the fortunes of newspapers and in encouraging investments in serious journalism. For instance, allowing Americans to deduct the price of an annual newspaper subscription from their taxes would boost circulation while creating the potential for papers to be less reliant on advertising revenue, and thus less vulnerable to pressures from advertisers. However, even this innovative approach runs the risk, if it were embarked upon in isolation, of reinforcing the bad habits of US media owners.

What America needs are new and better models of newspaper ownership. Instead of letting the FCC open the way for chain newspapers to establish local monopolies by eliminating the ban on cross-ownership, Congress should concern itself with re-establishing competition and innovation by encouraging the breakup of chains and the sale of big-city dailies to local owners who value the role a great newspaper can play in a community. Much has been made of the interest expressed by wealthy newspaper fans like entertainment mogul David Geffen, former supermarket magnate Ron Burkle and former home builder Eli Broad in buying the *Los Angeles Times*. Broad, a critic of chain ownership who suggests that distant





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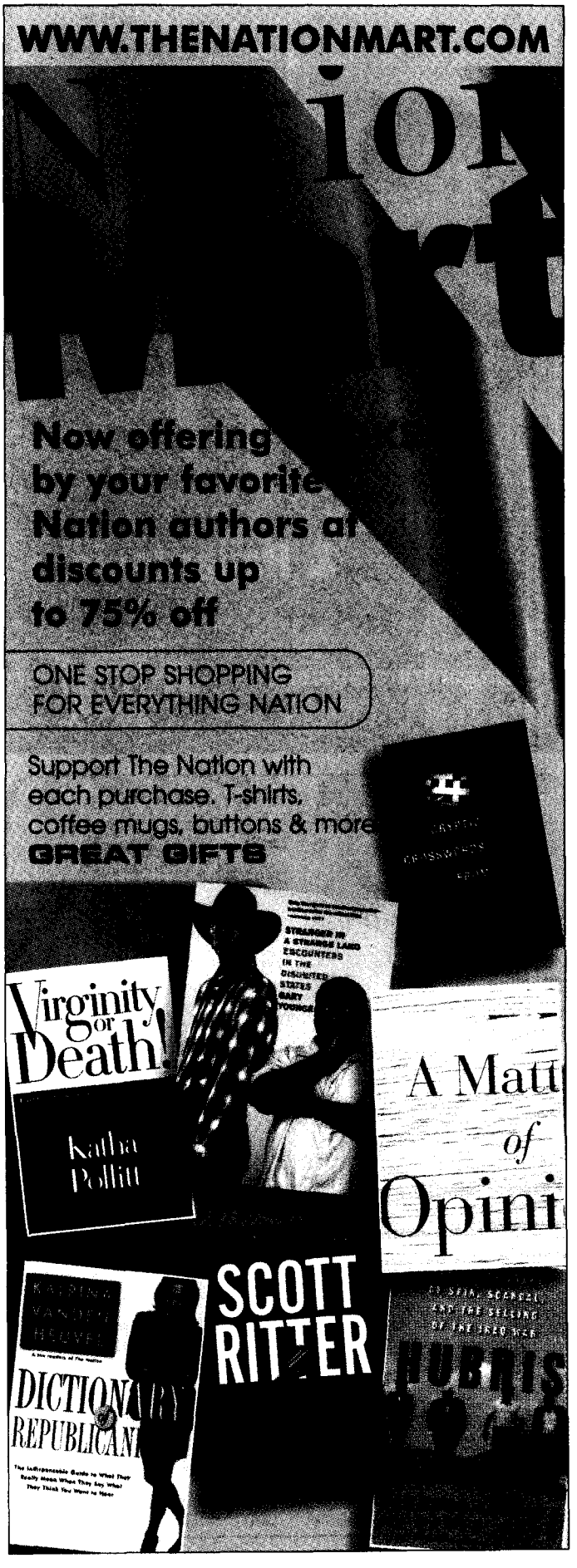

owners of local newspapers ill-serve the communities in which they publish, explains, "I believe a newspaper is a civic asset, a civic trust. I see a role for foundations that are not totally bottom-line oriented somehow being involved in the newspaper industry and/or civic-minded families or others."

Broad's line of reasoning should be encouraged. But the most important aspect of his vision is that reference to "others" who might own newspapers. Civic-minded families may well have a better record of running newspapers than distant investors, but there aren't enough wealthy philanthropists to go around, and besides, they aren't all "civic minded." Foundations and trusts, which control a handful of American newspapers, present a more interesting prospect. While the experience is limited, foundation-controlled newspapers such as the *St. Petersburg Times* do, for the most part, have better journalistic reputations than their competitors. Congress should concern itself particularly with developing policies that would make it easier—through shifts in approaches to taxation, postal subsidies and the often-abused "joint operating agreements" established in a number of larger cities to help maintain competition—for newspaper employees, unions and even community coalitions to buy, and perhaps even start, newspapers.

Representative Maurice Hinchey, the New York Democrat who chairs the Congressional Future of American Media Caucus, has the right idea when he says Congress should seek to assure that the American people "have easy access to vast sources of news so that they can be well-informed with a diverse mix of reporting and opinion." That may sound like a broad goal, but it's the right organizing principle. No matter what the fate of newspapers, developing new models for ownership of institutions that gather, analyze, comment upon and then distribute the news—be they newspapers, television stations, radio stations, websites or whatever the product of the next great technological leap—is essential to making sure that journalism survives and thrives.

Much of the current media landscape would have been unimaginable just a few decades ago. Much of what will be is equally unimaginable. What is necessary now is a determination to insure that the media of the future deliver not merely for owners but for workers, news consumers and democracy. Perhaps newspapers really can survive in a form familiar to those of us who cherish them. But even if that is not to be, they must survive in a form that fosters a healthy transition from old media to new, and that preserves and, one hopes, improves journalism. The transition need not be tidy. It should embody the experimentation, adventurousness and glorious failures that our current crop of risk-averse publishers have shunned.

Above all, the debate about the future of newspapers should not be ceded to the investment-driven corporations that have failed so miserably to maintain media that sustain both themselves and democracy. Americans who recognize that newspapers remain, at least for the time being, essential generators of journalism, and that the serious-minded gathering and analysis of news is still necessary for an informed and engaged citizenry, must join reporters and editors in the struggle to assure that even if newspapers do not survive forever, journalism will. ■

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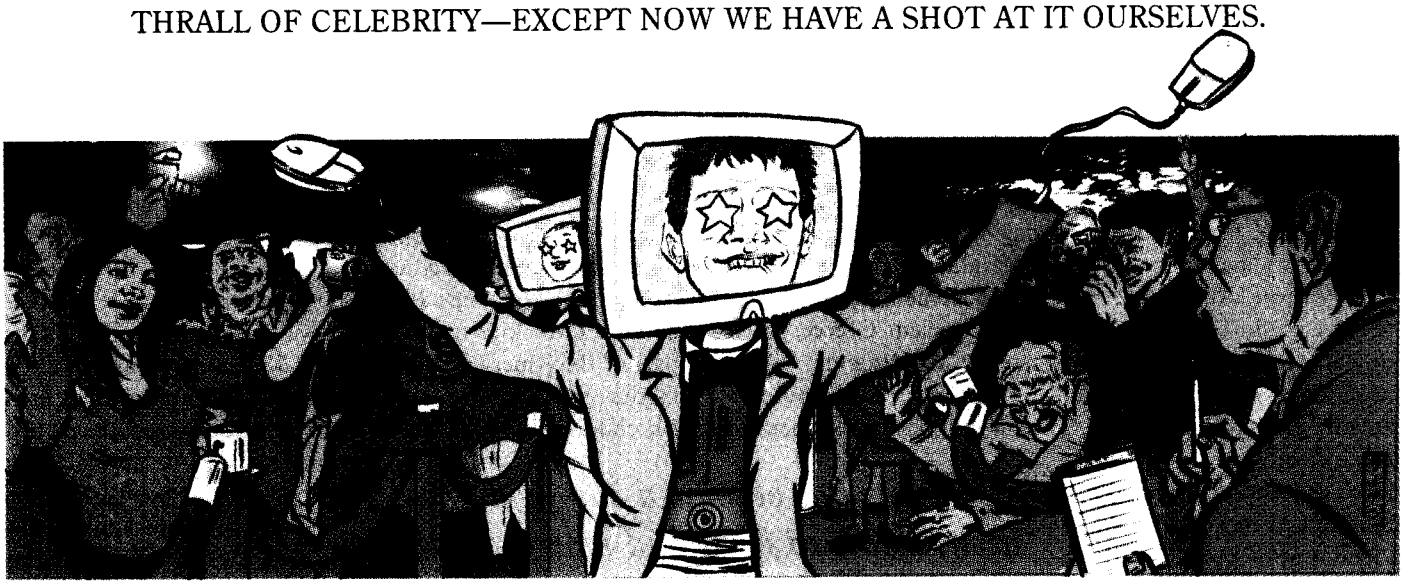

RYAN INZANA

Mirror, Mirror On the Web

LAKSHMI CHAUDHRY

"Everyone, in the back of his mind, wants to be a star," says YouTube co-founder Chad Hurley, explaining the dizzying success of the online mecca of amateur video in *Wired* magazine. And thanks to MySpace, YouTube, Facebook, LiveJournal and other bastions of the retooled Web 2.0, every Jane, Joe or Jamila can indeed be a star, be it as wannabe comics, citizen journalists, lip-syncing geeks, military bloggers, aspiring porn stars or even rodent-eating freaks.

We now live in the era of micro-celebrity, which offers endless opportunities to celebrate that most special person in your life, i.e., you—who not coincidentally is also *Time* magazine's widely derided Person of the Year for 2006. An honor once reserved for world leaders, pop icons and high-profile CEOs now belongs to "you," the ordinary netizen with the time, energy and passion to "make a movie starring my pet iguana...mash up 50 Cent's vocals with Queen's instrumentals...blog about my state of mind or the state of the nation or the *steak-frites* at the new bistro down the street."

The editors at *Time* tout this "revolution" in the headiest prose: "It's a story about community and collaboration on a scale never seen before. It's about the cosmic compendium of knowledge Wikipedia and the million-channel people's network YouTube and the online metropolis MySpace. It's about the many wresting power from the few and helping one another for nothing and how that will not only change the world, but also change the way the world changes."

This is the stuff of progressive fantasy: change, community, collaboration. And it echoes our cherished hope that a medium by, of and for the people will create a more democratic world. So it's easy to miss the editorial sleight of hand that slips from the "I" to the "we," substitutes individual self-expression for collective action and conflates popular attention with social consciousness.

For all the talk about coming together, Web 2.0's greatest successes have capitalized on our need to feel significant and admired and, above all, to be seen. The latest iteration of digital democracy has indeed brought with it a new democracy of fame, but in doing so it has left us ever more in the thrall of celebrity, except now we have a better shot at being worshiped ourselves. As MySpace luminary Christine Dolce told the *New York Post*, "My favorite comment is when people say that I'm their idol. That girls look up to me."

So we upload our wackiest videos to YouTube, blog every sordid detail of our personal lives so as to insure at least fifty inbound links, add 200 new "friends" a day to our MySpace page with the help of friendflood.com, all the time hoping that one day all our efforts at self-promotion will merit—at the very least—our very own Wikipedia entry.

In *The Frenzy of Renown*, written in 1986, Leo Braudy documented the long and intimate relationship between mass media and fame. The more plentiful, accessible and immediate the ways of gathering and distributing information have become, he wrote, the more ways there are to be known: "In the past that medium was usually literature, theater, or public monuments. With the Renaissance came painting and engraved portraits, and the modern age has added photography, radio, movies, and television. As each new medium of fame appears, the human image it conveys is intensified and the number of

Lakshmi Chaudhry, a senior editor at In These Times, *is a contributing writer to* The Nation. *Her work has appeared in the* Village Voice, Wired News, AlterNet, Ms. *and* Bitch.

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individuals celebrated expands." It's no surprise then that the Internet, which offers vastly greater immediacy and accessibility than its top-down predecessors, should further flatten the landscape of celebrity.

The democratization of fame, however, comes at a significant price. "Through the technology of image reproduction and information reproduction, our relation to the increasing number of faces we see every day becomes more and more transitory, and 'famous' seems as devalued a term as 'tragic,'" Braudy wrote. And the easier it is to become known, the less we have to do to earn that honor. In ancient Greece, when fame was inextricably linked to posterity, an Alexander had to make his mark on history to insure that his praises would be sung by generations to come. The invention of the camera in the nineteenth century introduced the modern notion of fame linked inextricably to a new type of professional: the journalist. Aspiring celebrities turned increasingly to achievements that would bring them immediate acclaim, preferably in the next day's newspaper, and with the rise of television, on the evening news.

Celebrity has become a commodity in itself, detached from and more valuable than wealth or achievement.

The broadcast media's voracious appetite for spectacle insured that notoriety and fame soon became subsumed by an all-encompassing notion of celebrity, where simply being on TV became the ultimate stamp of recognition. At the same time, advertisers sought to redefine fame in terms of buying rather than doing, fusing the American Dream of material success with the public's hunger for stars in programs such as *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*.

But the advent of cyber-fame is remarkable in that it is divorced from any significant achievement—farting to the tune of "Jingle Bells," for example, can get you on VH1. While a number of online celebrities are rightly known for doing something (a blogger like Markos Moulitsas, say), and still others have leveraged their virtual success to build lucrative careers (as with the punk-rock group Fall Out Boy), it is no longer necessary to do either in order to be "famous."

Fame is now reduced to its most basic ingredient: public attention. And the attention doesn't have to be positive either, as in the case of the man in Belfast who bit the head off a mouse for a YouTube video. "In our own time merely being looked at carries all the necessary ennoblement," Braudy wrote twenty years ago, words that ring truer than ever today.

Celebrity has become a commodity in itself, detached from and more valuable than wealth or achievement. Even rich New York socialites feel the need for their own blog, socialiterank.com, to get in on the action. The advice for aspiring celebutantes may be tongue-in-cheek—"To become a relevant socialite, you are virtually required to have your name in the press"—but no less true in this age of Paris Hilton wannabes.

Fame is no longer a perk of success but a necessary ingredient, whether as a socialite, chef, scholar or skateboarder. "For a great many people it is no longer enough to be very good at what you do. One also has to be a public figure, noticed and celebrated, and preferably televised," writes Hal Niedzviecki in his book *Hello, I'm Special*. When it is more important to be seen than to be talented, it is hardly surprising that the less gifted among us are willing to fart our way into the spotlight.

The fantasy of fame is not new, but what is unprecedented is the primacy of the desire, especially among young people. "I wanna be famous because I would love it more than anything.... Sometimes I'll cry at night wishing and praying for a better life to be famous... To be like the others someday too! Because i know that I can do it!" declares Britney Jo, writing on iWannaBeFamous.com.

She is hardly unusual. A 2000 Interprise poll revealed that 50 percent of kids under 12 believe that becoming famous is part of the American Dream. It's a dream increasingly shared by the rest of the world, as revealed in a recent survey of British children between 5 and 10, who most frequently picked being famous as the "very best thing in the world." The views of these young children are no different from American college freshmen, who, according to a 2004 survey, most want to be an "actor or entertainer."

Our preoccupation with fame is at least partly explained by our immersion in a media-saturated world that constantly tells us, as Braudy described it, "we should [be famous] if we possibly can, because it is the best, perhaps the only, way to be." Less obvious, however, is how our celebrity culture has fueled, and been fueled by, a significant generational shift in levels of narcissism in the United States.

In the 1950s, only 12 percent of teenagers between 12 and 14 agreed with the statement, "I am an important person." By the late 1980s, the number had reached an astounding 80 percent, an upward trajectory that shows no sign of reversing. Preliminary findings from a joint study conducted by Jean Twenge, Keith Campbell and three other researchers revealed that an average college student in 2006 scored higher than 65 percent of the students in 1987 on the standard Narcissism Personality Inventory test, which includes statements such as "I am a special person," "I find it easy to manipulate people" and "If I were on the *Titanic*, I would deserve to be on the *first* lifeboat." In her recent book *Generation Me*, Twenge applies that overarching label to everyone born between 1970 and 2000.

According to Twenge and her colleagues, the spike in narcissism is linked to an overall increase in individualism, which has been fostered by a number of factors, including greater geographical mobility, breakdown of traditional communities and, more important, "the self-focus that blossomed in the 1970s [and] became mundane and commonplace over the next two decades." In schools, at home and in popular culture, children over the past thirty-odd years have been inculcated with the same set of messages: You're special; love yourself; follow your dreams; you can be anything you want to be.

These mantras, in turn, have been woven into an all-pervasive commercial narrative used to hawk everything from movie tickets to sneakers. Just do it, baby, but make sure you buy that pair of Nikes first. The idea that every self is important has been redefined to suit the needs of a cultural marketplace that devalues

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genuine community and selfhood in favor of "success." In this context, "feeling good about myself" becomes the best possible reason to staple one's stomach, buy that shiny new car, or strip for a Girls Gone Wild video. The corollary of individualism becomes narcissism, an inflated evaluation of self-worth devoid of any real sense of "self" or "worth."

Since a key component of narcissism is the need to be admired and to be the center of attention, Generation Me's attraction to fame is inevitable. "You teach kids they're special. And then they watch TV, the impression they get is that everyone should be rich and famous. Then they hear, 'You can be anything you want.' So they're like, 'Well, I want to be rich and famous,'" says Twenge. Or if not rich and famous, at least to be "seen"—something the rest of us plebeians can now aspire to in the brave new media world. "To be noticed, to be wanted, to be loved, to walk into a place and have others care about what you're doing, even what you had for lunch that day: that's what people want, in my opinion," *Big Brother* contestant Kaysar Ridha told the *New York Times*, thus affirming a recent finding by Drew Pinsky and Mark Young that reality TV stars are far more narcissistic than actors, comedians or musicians—perhaps because they reflect more closely the reason the rest of us are obsessed more than ever with "making it."

Not only do Americans increasingly want to be famous, they believe they will *be famous, more so than any previous generation.*

Not only do Americans increasingly want to be famous, but they also believe they *will* be famous, more so than any previous generation. A Harris poll conducted in 2000 found that 44 percent of those between the ages of 18 and 24 believed it was at least somewhat likely that they would be famous for a short period. Those in their late twenties were even more optimistic: Six in ten expected that they would be well-known, if only briefly, sometime in their lives. The rosy predictions of our destiny, however, contain within them the darker conviction that a life led outside the spotlight would be without value. "People want the kind of attention that celebrities receive more than anything else," says Niedzviecki. "People want the recognition, the validation, the sense of having a place in the culture [because] we no longer know where we belong, what we're about or what we should be about."

Without any meaningful standard by which to measure our worth, we turn to the public eye for affirmation. "It's really the sense that Hey, I exist in this world, and that is important. That I matter," Niedzviecki says. Our "normal" lives therefore seem impoverished and less significant compared with the media world, which increasingly represents all that is grand and worthwhile, and therefore more "real."

No wonder then that 16-year-old Rachel, Britney Jo's fellow aspirant to fame on iWannaBeFamous.com, rambles in desperation, "I figured out that I am tired of just dreaming about doing something, I am sick of looking for a "regular" job... I feel life slipping by, and that 'something is missing' feeling begins to dominate me all day and night, I can't even watch the Academy Awards ceremony without crying...that is how I know...that is me.... I have to be...in the movies!!!"

The evolution of the Internet has both mirrored and shaped the intense focus on self that is the hallmark of the post-boomer generation. "If you aren't posting, you don't exist. People say, 'I post, therefore I am,'" Rishad Tobaccowala, CEO of Denuo, a new media consultancy, told *Wired*, inadvertently capturing the essence of Web 2.0, which is driven by our hunger for self-expression. Blogs, amateur videos, personal profiles, even interactive features such as Amazon.com's reviews offer ways to satisfy our need to be in the public eye.

But the virtual persona we project online is a carefully edited version of ourselves, as "authentic" as a character on reality TV. People on reality TV "are ultra-self-aware versions of the ordinary, über-facsimiles of themselves in the same way that online personals are *recreations* of self constantly tweaked for maximum response and effect," writes Niedzviecki in his book.

Self-expression glides effortlessly into self-promotion as we shape our online selves—be it on a MySpace profile, LiveJournal blog or a YouTube video—to insure the greatest attention. Nothing beats good old-fashioned publicity even in the brave new world of digital media. So it should come as no shock that the oh-so-authentic LonelyGirl15 should turn out to be a PR stunt or that the most popular person on MySpace is the mostly naked Tila Tequila, the proud purveyor of "skank-pop" who can boast of 1,626,097 friends, a clothing line, a record deal and making the cover of *Maxim UK* and *Stuff* magazines. YouTube has become the virtual equivalent of Los Angeles, the destination de rigueur for millions of celebrity aspirants, all hoping they will be the next Amanda Congdon, the videoblogger now with a gig on ABCNews.com, or the Spiridellis brothers, who landed venture capital funding because of their wildly popular video "This Land."

Beginning with the dot-com boom in the 1990s through to its present iteration as Web 2.0, the cultural power of the Internet has been fueled by the modern-day Cinderella fantasy of "making it." With their obsessive focus on A-list bloggers, upstart twentysomething CEOs and an assortment of weirdos and creeps, the media continually reframe the Internet as yet another shot at the glittering prize of celebrity. "We see the same slow channeling of the idea that your main goal in life is to reach as many people as possible all over the world with your product. And your product is you," says Niedzviecki. "As long as that's true, it's very hard to see how the Internet is going to change that." As long as more democratic media merely signify a greater democracy of fame—e.g., look how that indie musician landed a contract with that major label—we will remain enslaved by the same narrative of success that sustains corporate America.

In our eagerness to embrace the web as a panacea for various political ills, progressives often forget that the Internet is merely a medium like any other, and the social impact of its various features—interactivity, real-time publishing, easy access, cheap mass distribution—will be determined by the people who use them. There is no doubt that these technologies have facilitated greater activism, and new forms of it, both on- and offline. But

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we confuse the web's promise of increased visibility with real change. Political actions often enter the ether of the media world only to be incorporated into narratives of individual achievement. And the more successful among us end up as bold-faced names, leached dry of the ideas and values they represent—yet another face in the cluttered landscape of celebrity, with fortunes that follow the usual trajectory of media attention: First you're hot, and then you're not.

"It's all about you. Me. And all the various forms of the First Person Singular," writes cranky media veteran Brian Williams in his contribution to *Time*'s year-end package. "Americans have decided the most important person in their lives is...them, and our culture is now built upon that idea." So, have we turned into a nation of egoists, uninterested in anything that falls outside our narrow frame of self-reference?

As Jean Twenge points out, individualism doesn't necessarily preclude a social conscience or desire to do good. "But [Generation Me] articulates it as 'I want to make a difference,'" she says. "The outcome is still good, but it does put the self in the center." Stephen Duncombe, on the other hand, author of the new book *Dream: Re-imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy*, argues that rather than dismiss our yearning for individual recognition, progressives need to create real-world alternatives that offer such validation. For example, in place of vast anonymous rallies that aim to declare strength in numbers, he suggests that liberal activism should be built around small groups. "The size of these groups is critical. They are intimate affairs, small enough for each participant to have an active role in shaping the group's direction and voice," he writes. "In these 'affinity groups,' as they are called, every person is recognized: in short, they exist."

Such efforts, however, would have to contend with GenMe's aversion to collective action. "The baby boomers were self-focused in a different way. Whether it was self-examination like EST or social protest, they did everything in groups. This new generation is allergic to groups," Twenge says. And as Duncombe admits, activism is a tough sell for a nation weaned on the I-driven fantasy of celebrity that serves as "an escape from democracy with its attendant demands for responsibility and participation."

There is a happier alternative. If these corporate technologies of self-promotion work as well as promised, they may finally render fame meaningless. If everyone is onstage, there will be no one left in the audience. And maybe then we rock stars can finally turn our attention to life down here on earth. Or it may be life on earth that finally jolts us out of our admiring reverie in the mirrored hall of fame. We forget that this growing self-involvement is a luxury afforded to a generation that has not experienced a wide-scale war or economic depression. If and when the good times come to an end, so may our obsession with fame. "There are a lot of things on the horizon that could shake us out of the way we are now. And some of them are pretty ugly," Niedzviecki says. "You won't be able to say that my MySpace page is more important than my real life.... When you're a corpse, it doesn't matter how many virtual friends you have." Think global war, widespread unemployment, climate change. But then again, how cool would it be to vlog your life in the new Ice Age—kind of like starring in your very own *Day After Tomorrow*. LOL. ■

LETTERS
CONTINUED

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previous attempts at peace have failed (news to no one) and the colonization of the West Bank is irreversible: Settlements are "an irreversible reality." As he states in his book: "Palestinians do not have the political or material strengths to stop the settlements and walls that have rendered a two-state solution unworkable"; and: "there seems to be no constellation of internal or external forces that will push Israel out of the West Bank against its will." So Abunimah concludes from this that Palestinians should abandon their struggle for national self-determination and construct a "moral" struggle for "individual rights" and democracy within a binational state. For "diaspora Palestinians" like himself, he revealingly states, who are "long accustomed to transience and movement," nationalism "has lost its luster." If only the Palestinians can now be as inclusive as the ANC, Abunimah wishes: "build a consensus around a clear, simple, and inclusive alternative like the Freedom Charter" and "Israel's arguments are powerless in a struggle that is not about winning territory but securing democratic rights for all."

Such naïve moralizing misses the point I emphasized in my review: What was possible in South Africa has proven to be far less possible in Israel-Palestine. The reason is not Palestinian nationalism, as Abunimah charges, but the nature of Zionism itself. Unlike South African apartheid, Zionism is an exclusionary settler colonialism and has sought to dispense with rather than exploit the indigenous population. As Mona Younis argues: "While the majority of both whites and Jews were committed to exclusionary states in South Africa and Israel...the economic inclusion of Africans in South Africa permitted an inclusionary vision that had the potential of gaining support from significant sections of whites...Palestinian exclusion obviated this possibility in Israel." How can Abunimah expect bantustanized Palestinians to produce the same outcome of a one-state democracy in a situation where they are banished and cut off from their oppressors' structures? Where are Palestine's townships and labor movements, and where is Israel's Joe Slovo and his ANC-allied Communist Party, which had the support of a sizable and influential minority of whites?

This is why I felt it would have been worthwhile for Abunimah to consider the history of binationalism in Israel-Palestine more closely. It may have helped determine why binationalism has been such a weak and marginal option and explain why it has had such little support among Palestinians and none among Israelis.

But Abunimah cares little about popular opinion. He is unrealistic in proposing a solution that has zero support among Israelis rather than advocating a solution that has their majority support (negotiated peace) or at least their 34 percent support (withdrawal to 1967 lines) and is backed by an international consensus. If Abunimah has spent a lot of time objecting to the feasibility of the two-state solution, he spends far too little time appreciating why after forty years of Israeli colonization, rejectionism and demonization of Palestinians there still remains such solid support in Israel for ending the occupation. Any real advocacy would choose to work with a realistic political program as an initial step in resolving the conflict rather than with wishful thinking. BASHIR ABU-MANNEH

JUST ONE QUESTION

Champaign, Ill.

■ Regarding John Leonard's 3,360-word review of Thomas Pynchon's 1,085-page book ["Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind," Dec. 11]: Yeah, but is it any good? STEVE MCGAUGHEY

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Work Cut Out for Us

GEORGE SCIALABBA

According to exit polls, the two issues that concerned voters most in the midterm elections, by a large margin, were the failure of the Iraq War and corruption in government. This raises the question: What if the Iraq War had been less spectacularly mismanaged and right-wing politicians had been less extravagantly corrupt? Suppose the Republicans had been just a little more prudent and restrained—if, say, Paul Bremer hadn't disbanded the Iraqi army and civil administration, and if the party leadership had prevailed on legislators and staffers to wait a little longer before cashing in or at least to do it a little less visibly—would they have taken another large step last November toward permanent one-party government?

Michael Kinsley wisely remarked that the real scandal is usually not what's illegal but rather what's legal. Likewise, the real danger to American democracy is not so much reckless misjudgment or flagrant lawlessness as the methodical hollowing out of regulatory and labor law enforcement, environmental protection, fiscal solvency, respect for international law, Congressional sovereignty, judicial integrity, a competent civil service, procedural transparency, the contemporary and historical record and the ideal of civic virtue. Since 1980 democratic governance in the United States has been steadily undermined, as though by termites. A generation's worth of damage won't be easily repaired. And it's not certain yet that the Democrats will even try.

If they do, there's plenty of guidance available from a spate of valuable books published last election season. Nearly all are both expository, cataloguing Republican depredations, and strategic, advising on how to make American elections fairer and on how Democrats can win more of them. There are useful lessons here, and not just for the next two years.

The first is: Don't take the New Deal for granted. Most Americans, even Republicans, do, which is why many former Democrats have felt free since 1980 or so to vote Republican. But American capitalism in the post–World War II decades was not fully mobile, constrained by financial regulation and ideological competition. Now, thanks to the collapse of pseudosocialism, the triumph of the IMF-enforced Washington Consensus and a great deal of covert and overt regime change in the Third World, American capitalism is mobile and mean. The fundamental purpose of American foreign policy has always been to prevent the spread of the New Deal to the developing world. Having largely succeeded there, the business elites are now determined to roll it back at home.

'The Democrats are back!' Not so fast. Will they fight to repair a generation's worth of damage to our democracy?

They've made great progress. Organized labor has been decimated. Unemployment benefits have been trimmed. Much of our regulatory structure has been dismantled, defunded or handed over to industry flacks. Persistent false alarms about Medicare and Social Security have led to proposals that they be replaced by riskier and less generous individual health and retirement accounts. Most insidious, many policy options have been foreclosed simply by insuring that there won't be enough money in the government's coffers to pay for them. By means of tax cuts, energy subsidies, defense expenditures and financial deregulation, Republicans have transferred a trillion dollars or so (and with Social Security privatization, they seek to transfer a couple of trillion more) to their principal constituents, who have no need

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for or interest in New Deal programs. Prying a significant fraction of that money out of those people's hands in order to pay for Medicare, Social Security, tuition assistance, earned-income tax credits, etc. will require a revolution or (what is almost as unlikely) a determined and unified Democratic Congressional majority.

The rhetorical leading edge of the assault on the New Deal is the phrase "personal responsibility." The economic troubles of the 1930s taught most Americans an obvious lesson: Sharing risk makes everyone more secure. Conservatives grumbled, but a more secure workforce was, after all, less susceptible to leftist rabble-rousing. Besides, jobs were less exportable then, the domestic market mattered more and unions were still a force to reckon with. All that has changed. As a result, business has engineered a less secure, more disposable workforce with drastically reduced overhead (i.e., benefits) and bargaining power. The risks and costs of unemployment, illness and other forms of bad luck are being shifted from government and business to individuals and families. The principle of shared risk—that we are collectively responsible for one another—is being replaced by the principle of personal responsibility—that each of us is on his own, not entitled to expect help and not obliged to offer it. How this ethos—a convenient one for the rich—has been sold, and what it portends for the nonrich, is very well described in Jacob Hacker's *The Great Risk Shift*.

The environment, antitrust, civil liberties, executive power, science policy, the electoral system, the separation of church and state—here too the record of the Bush Administration has been one of nearly unbroken success. That is, they have implemented nearly all the policies they wanted to, with very much the results they intended, however unfortunate for the rest of us. Even their national security policies have largely accomplished their real goals: to channel tens of billions of dollars to corporate cronies, to further undercut international law and institutions, to demonstrate the United States' awesomely destructive military technology, to distract the electorate from the Administration's domestic policies. Permanent bases in Iraq and regime change in Iran may be unattainable for now, but the costs the United States is willing to impose on anyone threatening its energy dominance have been made starkly clear. Malevolent people inclined to propose changing the currency of the international oil market from the dollar to something else, as Saddam did, can't say they haven't been warned. The security of most Americans has not been enhanced, but that was never the point.

And so on, and on and on. Any nonrich, nonreligious person who has paid attention to politics since 1994, when the Goldwater/Gingrich Republicans took over Congress, and above all these past six years, has probably exhausted his or her capacity for indignation. The greed, the mendacity, the indifference, even hostility, to such notions as the common good or the public interest—the whole sorry record, reviewed in sickening detail by David Sirota and Mark Green, whose powerful books very much warrant their enraged titles and subtitles—have left many of us gasping.

We now have a bit of breathing space, thanks to the midterms. It's time to consider how the right got away with it and how to prevent it from happening again. The most useful of these books (along with Sirota's splendidly hard-hitting and extraordinarily well-documented *Hostile Takeover*) is Steven Hill's *10 Steps to Repair American Democracy*. "To ponder the shortcomings of our political system is to court despondency," Hendrik Hertzberg observes in his foreword. The Electoral College, the Senate, the disenfranchisement of the District of Columbia, the two-party duopoly, the winner-take-all principle, partisan redistricting, 95 percent incumbent re-election rates, media concentration, *Buckley v. Valeo*, the K Street Project, voter turnout below 50 percent, shortages of voting machines and poll workers—this is a functioning democracy? If these travesties of logic and fairness promoted majority rule rather than prevented it, they would doubtless have been abolished long ago. Hill's recommendations, beginning with proportional representation and instant-runoff voting, invariably hit the mark, and each of them is accompanied by links to groups already on the case. Perhaps his most radical notion—as he says, it goes "to the very heart of our political system"—is that representation should no longer be based on geography. Because of partisan residential patterns, more and more election districts are noncompetitive even without gerrymandering. Tens of millions of votes in American elections don't really count; and, perhaps as a consequence, millions more are never cast. Making representation correspond to what voters think rather than where they live is now perfectly feasible, as Hill makes clear. When (if) the Democrats regain the electorate's trust, they should consider proposing that, procedurally speaking, the United States join the modern world.

Hill's book is a no-brainer—there's simply nothing in it to disagree with. Thomas Edsall's *Building Red America* is another matter. Edsall is a celebrated political reporter, formerly of the *Washington Post*, and the author of two influential studies: *The New Politics of Inequality* and (with his wife, Mary) *Chain Reaction*. His new book is a shrewd, well-documented analysis of conservative movement-building and Republican electoral strategy, particularly how they've exploited white male voters' resentment of the Democrats' association with affirmative action, feminism and gay rights. What will be, or deserves to be, controversial is his clinching chapter, "The Democrats: Two Sets of Problems—Ideological and Structural."

Thomas Frank, Jeff Faux and others

BOOKS DISCUSSED IN THIS ESSAY

THE GREAT RISK SHIFT: The Assault on American Jobs, Families, Health Care, and Retirement and How You Can Fight Back.
By Jacob S. Hacker.
Oxford. 240 pp. $26.

HOSTILE TAKEOVER: How Big Money & Corruption Conquered Our Government—and How We Take It Back.
By David Sirota. Crown. 373 pp. $24.

LOSING OUR DEMOCRACY: How Bush, the Far Right and Big Business Are Betraying Americans for Power and Profit.
By Mark Green.
Sourcebooks. 390 pp. $24.95.

10 STEPS TO REPAIR AMERICAN DEMOCRACY: An Owner's Manual for Concerned Citizens.
By Steven Hill. PoliPoint. 233 pp. $11.

BUILDING RED AMERICA: The New Conservative Coalition and the Drive for Permanent Power.
By Thomas Edsall. Basic. 320 pp. $26.

BEING RIGHT IS NOT ENOUGH: What Progressives Must Learn From Conservative Success.
By Paul Waldman.
Wiley. 266 pp. $25.95.

ARMED MADHOUSE: Who's Afraid of Osama Wolf?, China Floats, Bush Sinks, The Scheme to Steal '08, No Child's Behind Left, and Other Dispatches From the Front Lines of the Class War.
By Greg Palast. Dutton. 360 pp. $25.95.

THE AUDACITY OF HOPE: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream.
By Barack Obama. Crown. 375 pp. $25.

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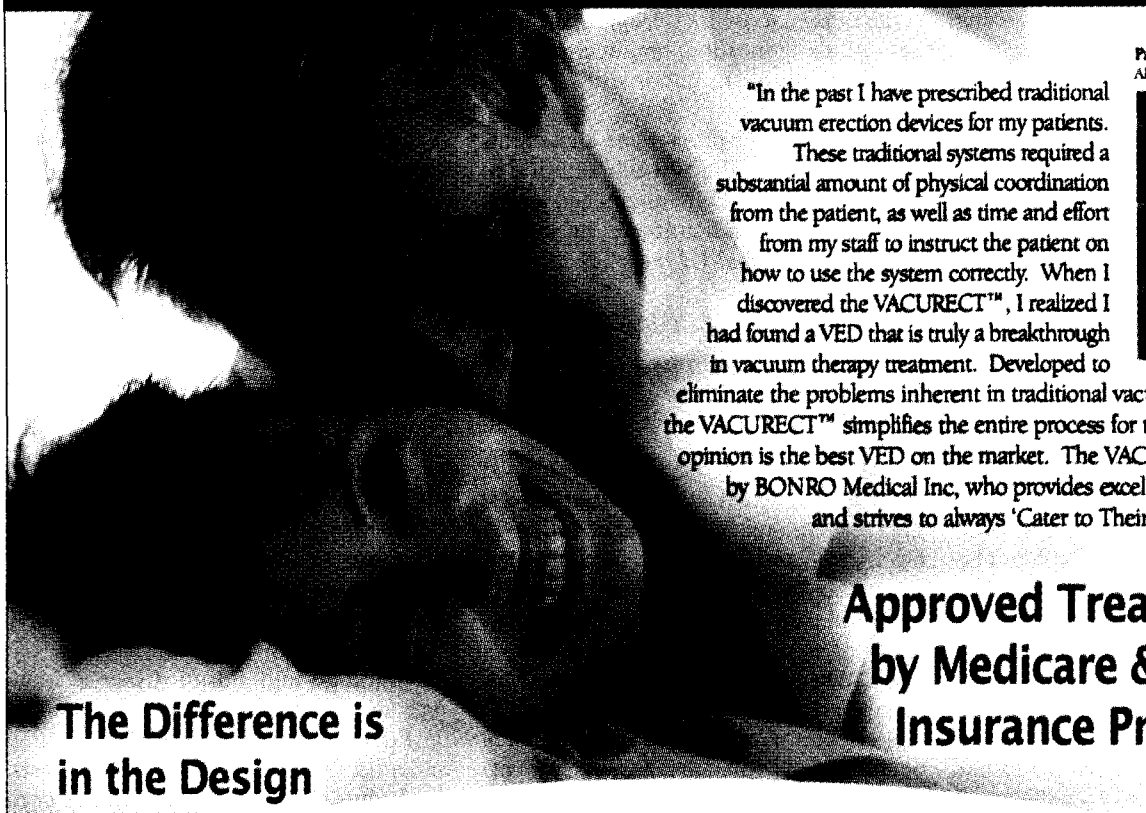

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have argued that the Democrats can become a majority party again by embracing economic populism. Edsall is not so sure. Populism, he points out, "requires a strong *majority* base of hard-working men and women who believe, with justification, that they are inadequately rewarded for their efforts, that they are personally demeaned, that they are deprived of their rights, and that their values are not honored by society." This, he claims, simply does not describe the contemporary Democratic Party's constituency. The party is an alliance of two groups, a "largely white, well-educated, professional class" and "the bottom third of the socio-economic ladder made up of lowest-income whites, blacks, and Hispanics," fewer than half of whom are employed. The former group, who set the party's agenda, are cultural liberals. The latter are demoralized, disorganized and inarticulate. A party with this profile is an unlikely vehicle for an economic populist movement.

What's more, Edsall argues, populism is about other values besides economic fairness, as the right has demonstrated over and over again since the 1960s. To millions of voters, "traditional values of family, neighborhood, church, school, and the workplace are...'money in the bank'—they are what holds people together, providing security against a rainy day, making possible credit based on trust and familial cooperation in entrepreneurial endeavors...[they] give individuals the backing and the fortitude to meet their obligations and to fulfill their ambitions even in the face of setbacks. From this perspective, the liberal culture—the Democratic liberal culture—appears dangerous, encouraging social chaos, eroding kinship networks, and facilitating community breakdown. For many American voters—more than Democrats are willing to acknowledge—perceived social chaos is a strong political motivator."

Even the case for economic fairness is not a slam-dunk: "Core GOP ideology revolves around the virtues of competition, whereas the Democrats' core philosophy revolves around the virtues of cooperation. The virtues of cooperation have become increasingly hard to sell to the top half of the income distribution in a country as driven by consumption, the acquisition of resources and status, and the tradition of individualism as is the United States. This is even more true when the bottom half of the distribution is heavily minority and when the left coalition is committed to values frequently antagonistic to those of moderates and conservatives—attitudes toward the distribution of wealth, equality, the women's movement, codes of sexual conduct, religion, the business ethos, education, multiculturalism, and the rights of the unborn."

So what should progressive Democrats do? Wait for the rest of America to catch up with their enlightened sexual and multicultural attitudes, meanwhile losing elections? Or back off from affirmative action, gay marriage, unrestricted abortion and sexual harassment codes, settling for economic justice and counting on blacks, gays and feminists to recognize that Democrats' hearts are in the right place?

Are most Americans cultural conservatives, and is that why liberals often lose the votes of people who otherwise agree with them?

Edsall won't say. He's a reporter, he insists, not an advocate. But he does drop a hint: "When...Democrats look to see who in their party has won, especially in general election contests with large numbers of conservative voters, a relatively clear pattern emerges. The two Democrats who won the presidency since 1968...ran as moderates, each maintaining some independence from the traditionally liberal social agenda, both Southern Baptists supporting the death penalty, and both conveying certain cultural values through the cadence and rhetoric of southern vernacular."

In other words, fudge. (The technical expression is "triangulate.") Perhaps that's the responsible, realistic, savvy thing to do. Certainly most Democratic strategists, particularly around the Democratic Leadership Council, will agree. But in a democracy, if a large enough majority of citizens want economic populism plus cultural conservatism, isn't that what there ought to be? And if that's not what there is, then it's not much of a democracy, is it? What these truisms imply is that perhaps the right thing for progressives to do is not hire ever cleverer triangulators but, instead, first make sure American democracy works (for which, see *10 Steps to Repair American Democracy*) and then get most Americans to agree with us.

For which, see Paul Waldman's *Being Right Is Not Enough*. Waldman is something of a rarity: a Democratic strategist who is as sick of triangulating as he is of losing elections. Like Edsall, he thinks progressives (and for those who dislike the word, he gives a good argument for preferring "progressive" to "liberal") have everything to learn from conservatives about building a movement; above all, stay the course. Edsall quotes a study by the Democracy Alliance: "Conservatives systematically invest in non-electoral, social, religious and cultural networks to wage a 'permanent campaign' that continuously dialogues with people around conservative values outside of election season and then inspires them to make conservative electoral choices. Progressive capacity concentrates efforts on the eve of elections, while conservatives work to create conservative culture and work to produce conservative voters year-round." Waldman echoes this: "Passive citizens don't proselytize; members of a movement do. And in recent years, all the proselytizing has come from the right. Conservatives have worked hard not just to motivate their own supporters but to turn opponents into supporters. In the process, they remade the Republican Party in their image."

Waldman and Edsall disagree, however, about something equally fundamental. Edsall, like Alan Wolfe, William Galston and other influential Democratic centrists, thinks most Americans are cultural conservatives. Waldman produces a mountain of polling data suggesting otherwise. On most economic, social and national security issues, a majority of Americans agree with Democratic positions rather than Republican ones. (The data seem solid, from Pew, Annenberg, Gallup, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, NBC, CBS, ABC, Fox, etc.) Why, then, do many more Americans call themselves conservative, moderate or independent than liberal or progressive? And why, until recently, did Republicans control the elective branches of government?

There are several plausible answers to the second question. One is that Republicans cheat. That the presidential election of 2000 was stolen is scarcely disputed. As for 2004 (and 2008), even those who have moved on should read Greg Palast's lengthy chapter "The Con" in his raucous book, *Armed Madhouse*. Another explanation is our defective Constitution: Though Democratic votes for Senate candidates consistently outnumber Republican votes, the two-senators-per-state rule means that the proportion of Republican seats to Republican votes far exceeds the proportion of Democratic seats to Democratic votes. Still another possibility is that more people with Democratic opinions don't vote than people with Republican opinions.

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Waldman emphasizes another, by now almost equally familiar, explanation: Democratic rhetoric. *Being Right Is Not Enough* is George Lakoff's *Whose Freedom?* done properly, with much firsthand experience brought to bear and without Lakoff's interesting but entirely superfluous cognitive-psychological baggage. Waldman's point, copiously and tellingly illustrated, is that Democrats aim at voters' minds, while Republicans aim at their hearts and imaginations; that Democrats aim to convince, while Republicans aim to arouse and inspire; that (to use Aristotle's categories) Democrats appeal to logos (reason), while Republicans appeal to ethos (morality) and pathos (emotion). "Voters aren't debate judges carefully marking their scoresheets," he reminds us. "Electoral success isn't about plans...and it isn't about ideas. It's about...how people feel about a candidate, and how he makes them feel about themselves." Republicans understand this; Democrats don't.

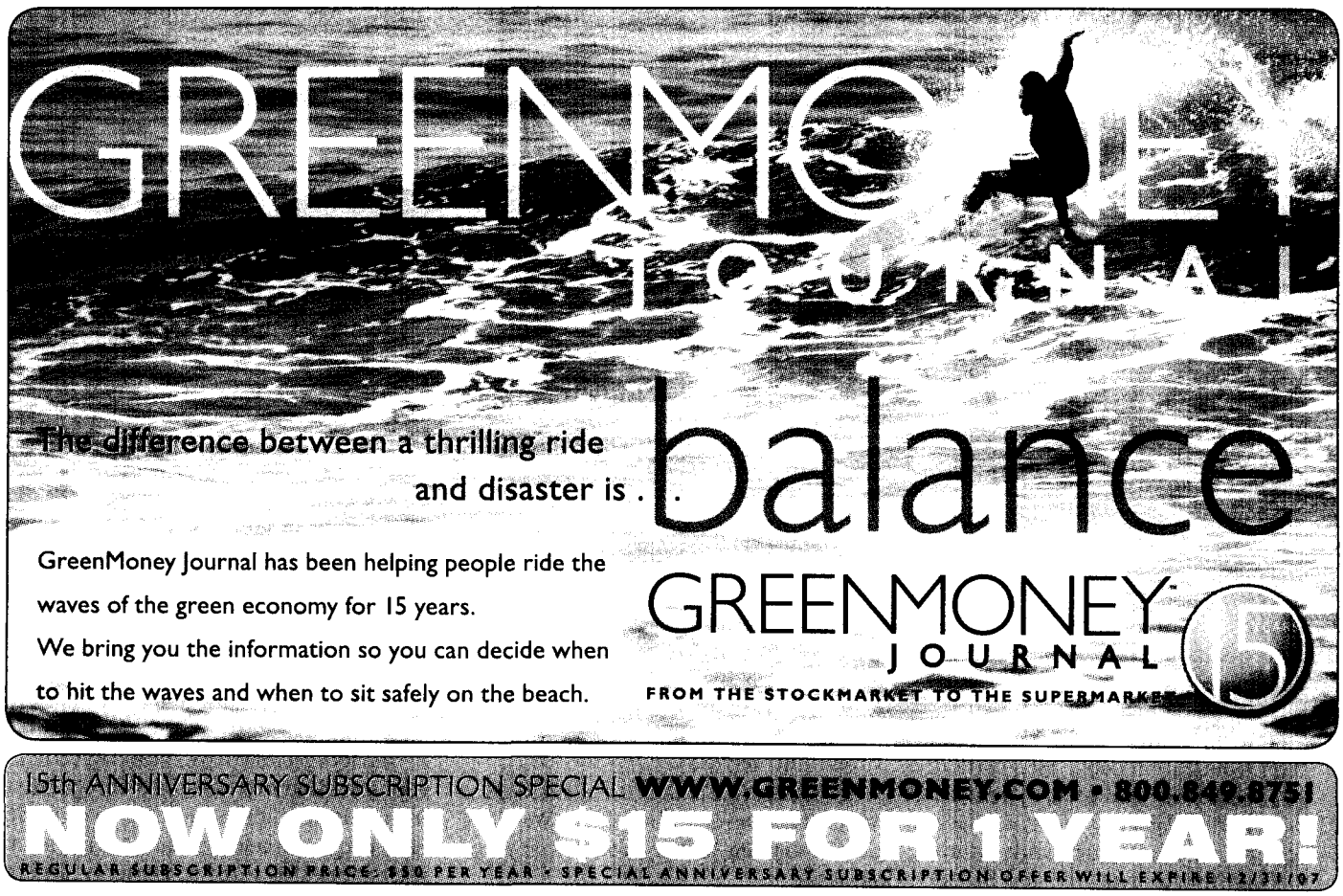
This doesn't mean Republicans don't have ideas. "In their full form, conservative ideas are just as complex as liberal ones," Waldman writes. But while "there are plenty of very smart conservatives who have thought long and hard about what they want to achieve and why...there are lots of other smart conservatives who have thought long and hard about how to reduce those complex ideas to simple expressions of values and beliefs. It is in this area that liberals have failed."

It is true, of course, that out in the field, Republicans very often exaggerate wildly, simplify ruthlessly and sometimes just lie. Waldman is not proposing that Democrats do this. If he's right about public opinion, they don't need to. What they need to do is get people's attention, win their trust, capture their imagination. He has lots of practical suggestions for doing this—stories, frames, contrasts, etc.—most of them very good. He also seems to understand that slickness is no use. Stories have their own integrity; you can't just manufacture them: "Just as the best art has both a complexity that challenges the intellect and an emotionality that touches the soul, political messages need to be logically persuasive and laden with emotion."

Still, as a mostly logos kind of guy, I was a tad ambivalent about having my nose rubbed so persistently in ethos and pathos:

> Progressives need to banish the idea that if only voters could be convinced to look at the issues, then everything would be fine.... Progressives need to understand that campaigns are not about issues.
>
> The way the American people relate to politics and make political decisions is not rational. There is nothing rational about it.
>
> One might argue that the Bush campaign's incessant invoking of September 11 was a way to short-circuit rational thinking on the part of the electorate, but one has to grant that it worked.

Waldman looks at recent presidential elections and is dismayed to find "a progression of Democratic candidates desperately pleading with voters to eat the political broccoli of position papers and policy proposals, while Republicans respond with the red meat of fear and anger." One sees what he means, of course, and he's right. Still, it's worth pausing over this piquant formulation. For one thing, broccoli is a lot more nutritious than red meat (which isn't always really red—some factory-produced meat is so pasty that it must be artificially colored), as well as tastier (e.g., when steamed with black mushrooms, baby corn, water chestnuts and tofu, seasoned with tamari and served over brown rice... mmm). But never mind that. I have no objection to carnivores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clogging their arteries and degrading their palates, any more than to smokers blackening their lungs. That's what freedom's for. As for the billions of animals (and thousands of illegal aliens) leading a wretched existence in meat factories before being slaughtered (or deported)—I sympathize, of course, but animals and illegal aliens don't vote, much less contribute to political campaigns. No, the real, unsentimental, non-goo-goo objection to meat factories (read: propaganda mills) is that they produce gigantic quantities of reeking manure, noxious gases and toxic feed additives (i.e., stereotypes, clichés and non sequiturs), which befoul the environment (i.e., the civic culture).

To put it nonmetaphorically: If we want a durably decent society, we have to improve the quality of political discussion. Yes, we will always need to address people's hearts and imaginations. But in the long run, their ability to think, to see through right-wing (and left-wing) bullshit, is even more important. After all, Rush Limbaugh is most dangerous not because he's a right-wing moron but because he's a moron. Karl Rove is most dangerous not because he's a right-wing liar but because he's a liar. Jerry Falwell is most dangerous not because he's a right-wing demagogue but because he's a demagogue. If voters had even a slightly enhanced tolerance for position papers and policy proposals, the influence of Limbaugh, Rove, Falwell et al. would evaporate, or at least be vastly diminished. Isn't that a worthwhile goal?

How to accomplish it? I don't know. Perhaps population exchanges or year-abroad programs between blue and red states. Perhaps *The Nation* should offer free subscriptions to registered Republicans. Perhaps Katha Pollitt and Ann Coulter (or Thomas Frank and David Brooks, or Greg Palast and Matt Drudge) should barnstorm the country, the way Stanley Fish and Dinesh D'Souza did in the 1990s. Perhaps all secular liberals should sign a pledge: Every time one evangelical reads a nonreligious book, one of us will go to church. Somehow or other, someone must sow a healthy appetite for informed, discriminating political argument across large swaths of the electorate where it now appears lacking. Otherwise, public life will become wholly (what it now is largely) a marketing competition, and nothing more.

Can Barack Obama make Americans eat their political broccoli? He's certainly gotten a lot of them to read, or at least buy, *The Audacity of Hope*. He seems to have struck a spark with granitic New Hampshirites recently; and Beltway reporter-chatterers are charmed—for now. His first book, *Dreams From My Father*, was a genuine achievement. Growing up in Hawaii and Indonesia; on the street in Chicago, organizing; visiting Kenya in search of his father and clan: It's a colorful background and he made, if not the most of it, then quite a bit. Samuel Johnson famously pronounced: "A woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all." Ditto for a politician's writing prose. *Dreams* had a fine loose rhythm and a nice way with dialogue. There were touches of staginess, corniness, didacticism, but the author was clearly a mensch and even, in a few passages, an artist.

The Audacity of Hope has touches of passion and vividness, but on the whole, it's a campaign document—a very, very good stump speech. Not broccoli but granola (i.e., fairly nourishing but with too much sugar). Lots of anecdotes, hardly any figures, many ringing but always carefully qualified statements of position. Just about all of them are reasonable, progressive positions. America will be very lucky if they're enacted into policy.

But Obama's no giant. In intellectual and moral stature, he comes just about up to Ralph Nader's or Barbara Ehrenreich's knee, or to Russ Feingold's or Barney Frank's navel. Nevertheless, he's probably the most intelligent, honest and idealistic of the Democratic presidential candidates.

So what? The quality of leaders matters less than the quality of citizens. President Obama, like President Hillary or President Anybody, will operate within constraints dictated by the balance of forces surrounding him, the sum of pressures brought to bear on him. For progressives, the goal should be to affect that balance, to contribute to that sum. Writing in *The Nation* last June, David Sirota observed: "Obama is all about the art of the possible within the system." What's possible is up to us. The main lesson of the right-wing ascendancy is: The bastards never give up; or as Yeats put it, rather more elegantly: "The best lack all conviction, while the worst/Are full of passionate intensity." The best had better get—and stay—off their asses. ■

Self-Consciousness Raising

MARTIN DUBERMAN

BOHEMIAN LOS ANGELES AND THE MAKING OF MODERN POLITICS.
By Daniel Hurewitz. California. 367 pp. $29.95.

What is the self? Do we all have one? Is it best treated with Botox or with books? Is it grounded in genetic concrete or manufactured by cultural circumstances? How can you tell the ersatz from the genuine article—and who's the best judge? Is having a self the same as having an identity, or are the two sequential, a successful excavation of one's "inner essence" leading to association, political and otherwise, with a group of like-minded essences?

The questions may sound as if they're lifted from a ditzy and dated issue of *Psychology Today*, but they are in fact subjects of heated debate in cutting-edge intellectual circles. Few historians (other than some queer ones) participate in such debates; most would claim that they're above such trendy foolishness, though the real reason may be that historians are a stodgy bunch—they're conservators, after all, and of The Past no less, that currently scorned, "irrelevant" territory.

Martin Duberman's new book, The Worlds of Lincoln Kirstein, *will be published by Knopf this spring.*

But now along comes a young historian named Daniel Hurewitz. With his first full-length book, *Bohemian Los Angeles* (a guidebook preceded), he jumps feet first into the recondite realm of essences and identities, and does so with the aplomb of a philosopher *manqué*. Hurewitz's impressive debut marks—to the extent one can ever predict such things—the arrival of a future scholar of the front rank. The imaginative boldness of *Bohemian Los Angeles* will inevitably draw counterfire. As I participate in that rebuttal, I hope the reader will keep in mind that I do so from an overall vantage point of admiration.

But let's get down to it. Working with the sophistication of a seasoned comparative historian, though more lucid than most, Hurewitz traces and evaluates the intersecting histories of three epicenters—artists,

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Communists and homosexuals—that coexisted in the LA subdivision of Edendale over a forty-year span (roughly the 1920s through the '60s). Hurewitz's research on these communities has been deep and comprehensive enough to allow him to raise a set of interlocking questions about how these seemingly disparate communities shaped themselves and influenced one another.

Along the way he tramples rather audaciously on some pretty hallowed ground. He challenges the widely accepted notion, for example, that lesbian bar culture of some fifty years ago was a significant proto-political site for subsequent gay organizing. Hurewitz also takes issue with the widely held view that the emergence of a gay identity in the early twentieth century was closely linked to the rise of capitalism, which, so the argument has gone, allowed individuals to escape the close scrutiny of the family farm for the anonymity of cities—where endemic oppression further politicized them. He thinks the origins of identity politics lay deeper, "in a broad array of social arenas where fundamental questions about the self and politics" were being asked; in "thirdspace" geographical locations like Edendale, at the margins of society (often called "bohemia"), where the values of a dominant bourgeois cultural structure were being undermined and where "the inner life...had to become conceptualized as a foundation of self-hood."

When dealing with the Communist enclave in Edendale, Hurewitz similarly argues (again, contrary to most historians) that the party created fertile soil in which individuals could examine and nurture their inner lives—in a manner comparable to the surrounding community of artists. Party members did not, in other words, surrender their individuality to the overarching need for a disciplined collective struggle against social injustice. "Edendale Communists," Hurewitz argues, "cultivated a dynamic relationship between individuals and society that further transformed and politicized the quest for essence." The search for an "authentic self," in short, purportedly characterized all three Edendale communities and gave them a shared vision and purpose.

In all of this, Hurewitz is trafficking in a high level of abstraction, one in which either proof or contradiction is difficult to establish. Selves and essences, values and symbolic systems—it makes the ordinary historian's factually grounded head swim with confusion (or shake with scorn). When Hurewitz argues, for example, that there is an "irreducible core" of uniqueness to each personality—"our psychic DNA"—and declares its discovery a fundamental precursor to political action, he induces an alarming note of panic. (Oh, Lord, do I qualify as having an established self or "core"? Have I mapped my psychic DNA with sufficient rigor? Since I'm unsure, perhaps I'd best refrain from "political action," lest the commitment be incomplete, inauthentic.)

Hurewitz argues that artists, gays and Communists in twentieth-century LA were on a common quest for an 'authentic' self.

In staking out his paradigm, Hurewitz proceeds from the assumption that the hallmark of modernity is the value placed on subjectivity. He may well be right, but it doesn't necessarily follow that the hallmark of humanity is the quest for an "interior essence," coupled with the urgent demand for its expression in the arenas of politics and art. To imply as much is simply to reflect, without interrogating, the Modernist turn that exalts individual specialness and gives questionable coherence (and importance) to our messy, puny existences. Hurewitz's brand of modernity flatteringly portrays the process of self-discovery as a conscious, willed affair, and rejects out of hand the possibility that our precious selves amount to little more than accidental accumulations of experiences, attitudes and values that centrally derive from the families and cultures we happen to have been born into, matters over which we have no control.

When Hurewitz comes to the third "epicenter" in Edendale—the community of artists that centered on the woodblock engraver Paul Landacre—his discussion lacks the detail he devotes to the Communist and homosexual worlds. He tells us that Edendale's artists "wrestled with" expressing their "inner selves" as "constituted by feelings and psychological constructs." But he doesn't provide enough information about the artistic community to validate such outsized claims, or to convince us that these "wrestlings" transformed Edendale into a place where "self-expression could be the mark of identity and the potential basis of a community." My nominalism may be getting the better of me, but Hurewitz's demonstration that several artists' clubs met regularly and that various friendships endured isn't enough to convince me that the discussion (or assumption) of shared inner essences was the central ingredient of those clubs and friendships.

Nor has Hurewitz persuasively established substantial interconnections among artists, homosexuals and Communists. Yes, a few isolated figures like Harry Hay, founder of the pioneering gay rights group the Mattachine Society, had ties to the worlds of theater and Communism, but *Bohemian Los Angeles* offers scant evidence that homosexuals (even covert ones) populated party or artistic circles in significant numbers. Hurewitz takes a still further giant leap when he goes on to insist that Mattachine was following "in the steps of their neighborhood forebears" when it set out, like the artists, "to create a medium in which they could express and discuss their inner lives and desires."

Setting aside the enigmatic question of what the artistic process actually consists of, it's implausible to assume that we can somehow quantify the amount of time actually spent in Mattachine meetings discussing "inner lives," and how deep those discussions might have gone. Hay, for one, saw homosexuals as distinctive enough to claim the title of an oppressed social minority, and he put out the welcome mat for gender nonconformists (effeminate or transvestite men). He also firmly believed that gay people needed to become politicized.

But the majority of Mattachine's members soon made it clear that they had little tolerance for "fairies" and drag queens, and proved wholly reluctant to leave their closets and publicly demand their rights. Beyond Hay and his limited circle, it's doubtful that many of Mattachine's early members were nearly as interested in "bringing their 'essence' to the surface" and making demands on the larger society as in ending their personal isolation, finding an outlet for socializing and for educating others about what good citizens—i.e., not degenerate fairies—they in fact were. Many were committed to the view that they were "just folks," give or take the minor matter of sexual orientation; and in the name of presenting themselves as candidates for assimilation, they downplayed rather than explored and celebrated their specialness. The dominant emphasis in Mattachine, after Hay and his friends left, was not on exploring how wondrously different they were from mainstream Americans but on masquerading as them.

Comparable questions can be raised about Hurewitz's schematic presentation of Edendale's Communists. They, too, don't seem to have considered the discovery and cultivation of their individual "essence,"

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or its expressive fulfillment, as either the source or purpose of their political commitment. They may well have gained a great deal personally through association with a group of like-minded activists; but consciously, at least, their purpose in affiliating with the party hinged less on a desire for expanding individual "awareness" and more (these matters are impossible to calibrate closely) on putting to work their ideological conviction that economic priorities needed restructuring in order better to serve the needs of the working class.

Hurewitz is surely right to argue that party members did form an intimate community from which they derived considerable personal fulfillment. But a secondary gain is not the same as a primary purpose. Hurewitz soft-pedals the undeniable fact that the party frowned on "subjectivity," that individual needs were expected to take a back seat to the collective good. And indeed that emphasis, not the discovery of one's "inner essence," may well be the mark of *any* mature politics. The Communists understood that despite the range of personalities within their ranks, they had come together to mobilize against a common enemy, not to fulfill their own singular, eccentric imperatives.

For women, the common enemy remains the patriarchy. For blacks and Latinos, it is still white racism. For gay people, heterosexual oppression. None of these movements function effectively when the focus is on catering to the diverse needs of those enlisted in the ranks; the diversity can be acknowledged and supported, but a shared purpose must, for maximum effectiveness, remain the point of concentration. The common assumption that political action should be based on a fully shared—even identical—set of values and perspectives among those committed to a cause isn't a good operational guide for effective organizing. Within a given movement, differences are bound to exist among the rank and file in regard to class, race, gender, age, geographical location, religious belief and so on. But when those differences become the prime focus of attention, the energy that should be saved for working against a common oppressor gets diverted and sapped. To form powerful, effective political organizations, individuals cannot be allowed to let the differences that separate them usurp the agenda. One central reason movements for social reform in this country have rapidly run aground is our commitment to the ideological belief (not the practice) of the supreme importance of the individual.

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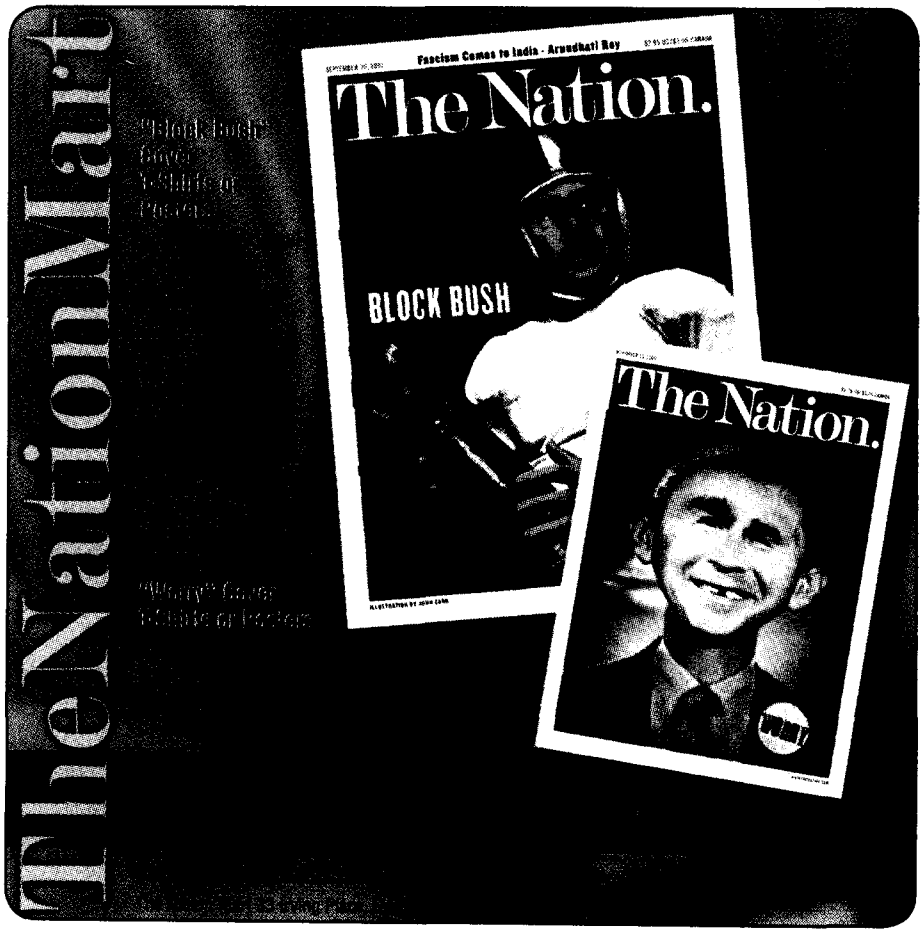

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geles that calls forth these outsized counter-arguments. In raising them I may now and then have attributed to Hurewitz some gross formulations that don't do justice to the overall subtlety of his argument. Let me repeat, then, my admiration for the book's many strengths. Hurewitz's prose is always lucid and sometimes (scholars take note!) downright exuberant—even when he's writing about fairly arcane matters. He has not only mastered the secondary literature relating to his subjects but has dug deeply into police records and newspaper accounts, as well as conducted a wide-ranging set of interviews. It is Hurewitz, after all, who has amassed the data and risked the interpretations that allow us to question aspects of his argument. If I sometimes longed for more precise definitions of "inner essence" and the like, or wished that his conclusions about "influence" were a bit more grounded and modulated, I have no doubt whatever that *Bohemian Los Angeles* marks a major, if flawed, contribution to several fields of inquiry, and will stir much useful debate. I strongly suspect that we can expect much from Daniel Hurewitz in the future. ■

ART

Surface Appeal

ARTHUR C. DANTO

"When philosophy paints its grey in grey," Hegel wrote in his *Philosophy of Right*, "then has a shape of life grown old.... The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk." It is difficult not to think of Hegel's elegiac reflection when one enters the first gallery of Brice Marden's retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art. It is hung with the signature gray canvases that Marden himself came to call "Brice Marden paintings" when he finally decided to stop painting them. What is striking is that they are not just gray monochrome rectangles. They are exactly gray in gray, with shadowy markings of darker gray that had served other painters, like Jasper Johns and Alberto Giacometti, as backgrounds for the objects or figures that carried the primary interest of their works. Marden seems to have brought them forward to coincide with the surfaces of his paintings, making his surfaces his subjects. In some of the early works, Marden left about an inch of raw canvas to catch the drips, which serve as a symbolic reference to the Abstract Expressionist movement that had inspired him and many other young painters of his generation. In the mid-'60s, when Abstract Expressionism was perceived as a finished movement, the drip remained an emblem of painterly legitimacy, evoking the physicality of pigment and the gestural sweep of the painter's arm. Even as cool an artist as Andy Warhol retained the drips on the silk-screened sides of his Brillo boxes, as a way of claiming descent from the founding fathers.

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Brice Marden, *6 Red Rock 1*, 2000–02

What "shape of life," then, to return to Hegel, has grown old in Marden's early work? Modernist painting, obviously, as understood by its deepest theorist, Clement Greenberg. As Greenberg argued in his 1954 essay "Abstract and Representational":

> From Giotto to Courbet, the painter's first task had been to hollow out an illusion of three-dimensional space. This illusion was conceived of more or less as a stage animated by visual incident, and the surface of the picture as the window through which one looked at the stage. But Manet began to pull the backdrop of the stage forward, and those who came after him...kept pulling it forward, until today it has come smack up against the window, or surface, blocking it up and hiding the stage. All the painter has left to work with now is, so to speak, a more or less opaque window pane.

Why then think of it as a window any longer? In Johns and Giacometti, the visual incident took place in an illusory space. The task of "Modernist Painting," as Greenberg titled his essay of 1960, was to arrive at an understanding of what the defining features of the medium were and, in the interests of purity, to purge it of everything else. For Greenberg, that "everything else" included illusion, despite its history. Painting, he believed, was in its essence two-dimensional and flat. Modernist painting, accordingly, was "flatter than anything in Western art since before Giotto and Cimabue—so flat indeed that it could hardly contain recognizable images." Now that space and surface coincide, there is no place left for painting to go. As the '60s ended, artists and critics could be heard stridently declaring that painting was dead. The first paintings in Marden's show date from the mid-'60s. The question they ask is: Where do we go from here? What is left after Modernism is over? It ended with the discovery of flatness. Now what?

That Abstract Expressionism was dead was the common wisdom in the art world by the mid-'60s. Marden was almost unique in realizing the deeper truth that Modernism was dead. But all around him exciting new things were happening in art, Pop most particularly, but also Minimalism, which was closer to his own impulses. The one painting that I believe signals an awareness of Pop (and my favorite painting in the show) is the wonderful down-to-earth rectangle *Nebraska* (1966), which approximates the shape that the state of Nebraska is represented as having in maps of the United States. The down-to-earthness is symbolized by its particular tone of gray, a kind of greenish dirtiness. But mostly Marden tried to find his way forward by joining his gray or grayish rectangles into diptychs or triptychs, as in *For Helen* (1967) or *Three Deliberate Greys for Jasper Johns* (1970), a tribute to one of the great pioneers who, along with Robert Rauschenberg and Cy Twombly, led New York art away from Abstract Expres-

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sionism into unexplored territory. And Marden widened his range of grayish hues to include blues and reds. It was not until the early '80s, however, that he felt compelled to change in a more radical way: "I got to a point where I could go on making 'Brice Marden paintings' and suffer that silent creative death.... You get to this point where you just have to make a decision to change things."

I don't think it is widely enough appreciated how much courage this kind of change takes. There is an overwhelming tendency in America to brand artists, so that the well informed can identify an example of an artist's work in a single, simple act of instant recognition: That is a Pollock, a Kline, a Nevelson, a Shapiro, a Ryman, a Rothko, a Marden. Warhol is a counter-example. Not only do his paintings vary profoundly over the years but also he worked in a variety of media, including film and television, reinvented cabaret, wrote books, evolved a style of aphorism and became his own most famous product. In this respect, Warhol was more like the German masters Sigmar Polke and Gerhard Richter, who have experimented liberally with different styles, including, in Richter's case, abstraction as well as photographic realism. (As it happens, Polke and Richter came to prominence as practitioners of an East German school of Pop Art coyly known as "Capitalist Realism," and deeply indebted to Warhol.) Perhaps branding is uncharacteristic of younger artists today, who express themselves through performance, installation and video, as well as the more traditional genres. Marden's change was not as radical as that of Philip Guston, who in 1970 abandoned abstraction in favor of a kind of loutish political comic figuration. Marden only went from one abstract style to another. Quite apart from taking a commercial chance, moving to an abruptly different style raises questions of sincerity that are never easy to deal with.

The change paid off, and opened up possibilities beyond gray in gray. It was like raising a window shade, revealing new realities.

Marden changed to a style of as-it-were Oriental calligraphy—in other words, he appropriated the look but not the reality of writing. Writing in its nature is on the surface of silk or paper. There is no impulse to postulate an illusory space for it to occupy, as in a drawing. So it is "modern" by default. Mixing writing with drawing, as in the Japanese or Chinese tradition, insured that there would never be in either culture the kind of history of art that defined Western painting, with its conquest of visual appearances and such devices as perspective or

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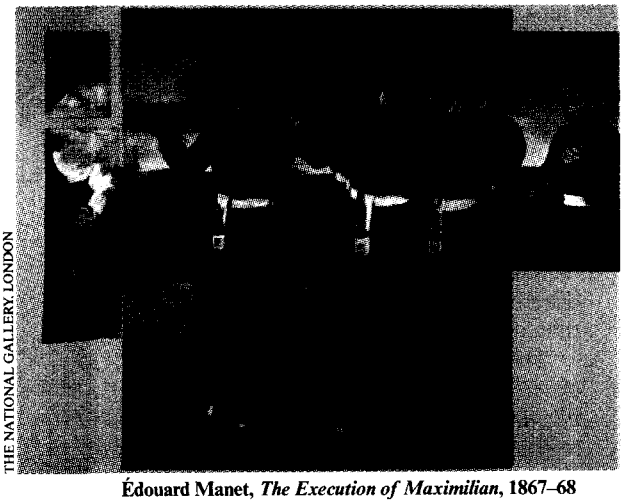
chiaroscuro. This is why until the emergence of Modernism, there was a tendency to treat Oriental art either as decorative or inferior. Part of the reason the Impressionists may have been so taken with Japanese print, for example, was that its flattening of forms made the surface into something one was aware of rather than a transparency through which one looked into space. So even if Marden thought of his calligraphies as drawings or even paintings, they remained, as it were, on the page.

He is most successful, in my view, in the drawings, where the white of the paper contributes a certain sparkle, and livens the rather deadish colors he carried with him into this phase of his work. Marden appears in these to have hit on something like the "grass" writing of Oriental calligraphy, loopy and lyrical, in which the brush rarely leaves the surface, and the artist improvises to the point that one needs special skills to read it. But the grass-writer inscribes an actual text, whose meaning invariably inflects the work's feeling. Marden's calligraphy is entirely abstract—gibberish, in effect—yet the strange thing is that it is evocative of language; it seems to communicate meaning while remaining entirely uncommunicative. *Han Shan Goes to the Tropics* (1991) is a beautiful example of this. "Han Shan" is Chinese for "Cold Mountain," though it designates a possibly mythical poet who wrote about Cold Mountain in a body of poetry from Tang times. Han Shan has the attributes of a Taoist hobo who lives in close communion with nature and has risen above material needs. It was in fact an edition of Cold Mountain's poems that inspired Marden. For my taste, however, the painted calligraphic canvases are too pasty for the lyricism he sometimes achieves on paper—too angular, awkward and almost clumsy for the spirit I suppose they mean to convey. There is a limit to a Westerner's capacity to internalize and realize an Asian sensibility.

In the latest works, Marden finds a way of working flat-on-flat, with colored ribbons interlacing one another on the kind of gray-in-gray surface he in a way had made his own. These really seem uninterestingly empty to me, vastly too large for the minimal meaning that is their reward. But then, in *Dragons*, working in colored ink on paper, he achieves something glorious, as if de Kooning had painted a Pollock. Brenda Richardson has written that "Pollock is a very real presence in Marden's Cold Mountain work." According to the show's curator, Gary Garrels, Pollock's influence "was one not simply of look and style but also of spirit." I am glad to see the term "spirit" making an appearance in contemporary discourse. "Spirit," Kant writes, "in an aesthetical sense, is the name given to the animating principle of the mind." Spirit puts the material to which the mind applies itself "into swing." Whether the same spirit that animated Pollock fifty years earlier animates Marden is an issue on which critics will differ. But the only piece in which I sensed the presence of Pollock's spirit is *Dragons*, where it almost looks out of place. Marden may not see it this way, but I think it is kind of a compliment to say that the artist, in the crowning exhibition of his career, shows promise.

By a happy coincidence of scheduling, visitors to MoMA have the opportunity not only to see the end of Modernism, in Marden's exhibition, but its beginning, which Clement Greenberg attributed to Édouard Manet. For students of Modernism, this offers a singular opportunity to examine Manet's *The Execution of Maximilian* for signs of the great movement Manet opened up. Certainly, Manet could have had no idea that his innovations would lead, in the course of a century, to the gray-in-gray monochrome. He would have said that he was infusing French painting with what he had discovered in Spanish art, particularly in the work of Velázquez and Goya, which he probably saw on a trip to Madrid in 1865. But we, visitors from the future, as it were, can see what it was about Manet's work that led Greenberg to think of him as the first Modernist.



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Édouard Manet, *The Execution of Maximilian*, 1867–68

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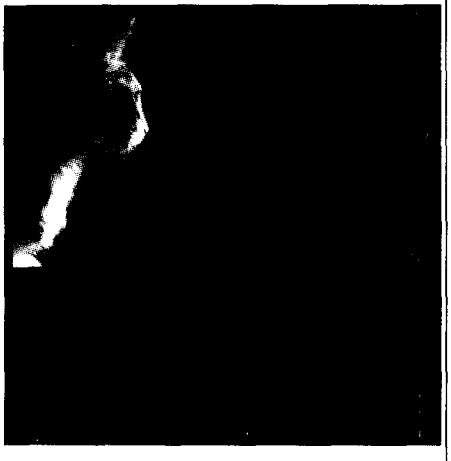

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advised imperial adventure in 1862 by Napoleon III, seeking to establish a French-backed monarchy in Mexico, which had become an independent republic in 1823. Together with some Mexican conservatives, he persuaded Maximilian, a Habsburg, to accept the throne, promising him military support. There was considerable resistance, and when the United States, emerging from the Civil War, supported the Mexican republicans, Napoleon cut and ran, as we say these days, leaving Maximilian unprotected. He was captured and shot by a firing squad in 1867, despite widespread appeals that he be spared. Napoleon was blamed for Maximilian's death, and it was perhaps because of Manet's antimonarchical politics that he decided to paint the event. He produced three large paintings of Maximilian's execution, as well as a smaller study and a lithograph, and it can be argued that the beginnings of a distinctively Modernist sensibility emerged in the course of this effort, though there were already indications, as Greenberg noted, of a new vision in his work as early as 1863.

Greenberg drew particular attention to the graphic flatness of the pantaloons in *The Piper*, and Courbet is said to have remarked that *Olympia* appeared "flat...like the Queen of Hearts coming out of a bath." (*Olympia*'s flatness may explain why it appeared to Manet's contemporaries almost comically inept, and wound up in the Salon des Refusés.) This flatness was, for Greenberg, distinctively Modernist. In classical Modernism, he wrote, "Design of layout is almost always clear and explicit, drawing sharp and clean, shape or area geometrically simplified or at least faired and trued, color flat and bright or at least undifferentiated in value and texture within a given hue." He might as well have been describing the Japanese prints that made such an impression on Manet and the Impressionists. Could the flattening out of forms be the result of bringing into Western art the idiom of the Japanese woodcut?

Along with flatness of composition, Manet introduced a flattening of affect, a new form of cool detachment. *The Execution of Maximilian*, whose final version was completed in 1869, is a perfect example of this, particularly when set against Goya's *The Third of May, 1808* (1814), which Manet presumably saw at the Prado. *The Third of May* also depicts an execution, an early event in the so-called Peninsular War between France and Spain. Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Spain in 1808, capturing its royal family and replacing them with his brother, Joseph. The French were as unpopular in Spain as they later were in Mexico, and they encountered a fierce in-

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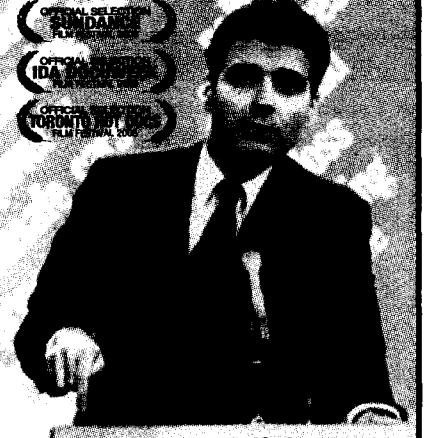

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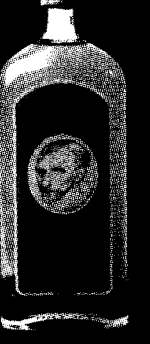

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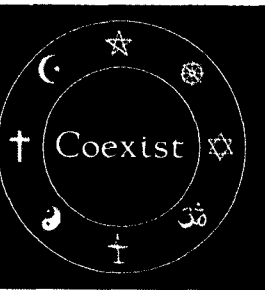

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surrection, which ultimately triumphed. The "Third of May" execution was an indiscriminate killing of civilians by French soldiers in reprisal for a guerrilla attack the previous day. Goya's painting of the massacre, which shows terrified civilians facing a firing squad, was intended to arouse anger and hatred on the part of Spanish viewers. Goya's is a highly romantic picture of a deeply emotional episode.

Manet's painting, by contrast, could hardly be cooler. The three victims, holding hands, face the firing squad with fortitude. The officer standing apart loads his rifle dispassionately, in case any of the victims survives. We do not see the faces of the firing squad itself. The scene is treated dispassionately and journalistically. There was no photographic record of the event, since it was forbidden. Manet shows it the way a photograph would, which was not an option for Goya, since photography had not been invented in 1814.

Manet's successive versions of Maximilian's execution reflect an effort to visualize the story as it unfolded in dispatches by correspondents, which were eagerly read by Europeans, who had no clear picture of what Mexico or Mexican soldiers actually looked like. One wonders if what was to become a Modernist painting, according to Greenberg, was not initially an effort to emulate the camera and produce something like a photographic print. Manet showed it from the perspective of a near eyewitness—so everything was brought forward, and inevitably flattened, the way the camera lens of Manet's time often flattened forms. It was as if photographs showed us with optical veracity how we actually see the world. In America, the photographs of Mathew Brady and Timothy O'Sullivan visually defined the Civil War for distant viewers. Goya, by contrast, drew on the conventions of academic historical painting, however romanticized.

One cannot but wonder whether Modernism was not the combined result of two modes of printing—the woodblock print and the photograph, each of which involved a kind of flattening. There would be a further question of whether Greenberg did not make a mistake in transferring to his analysis of the essence of painting what really defined the medium of the print. Maybe illusion is not that alien to painting after all, and those who feared that the invention of the camera meant the death of painting were barking up the wrong tree! If the progressive flattening of the surface has been the great journey of Modernist painting, abstraction, it turns out, was only one of its destinations, especially in an age of photography. ■

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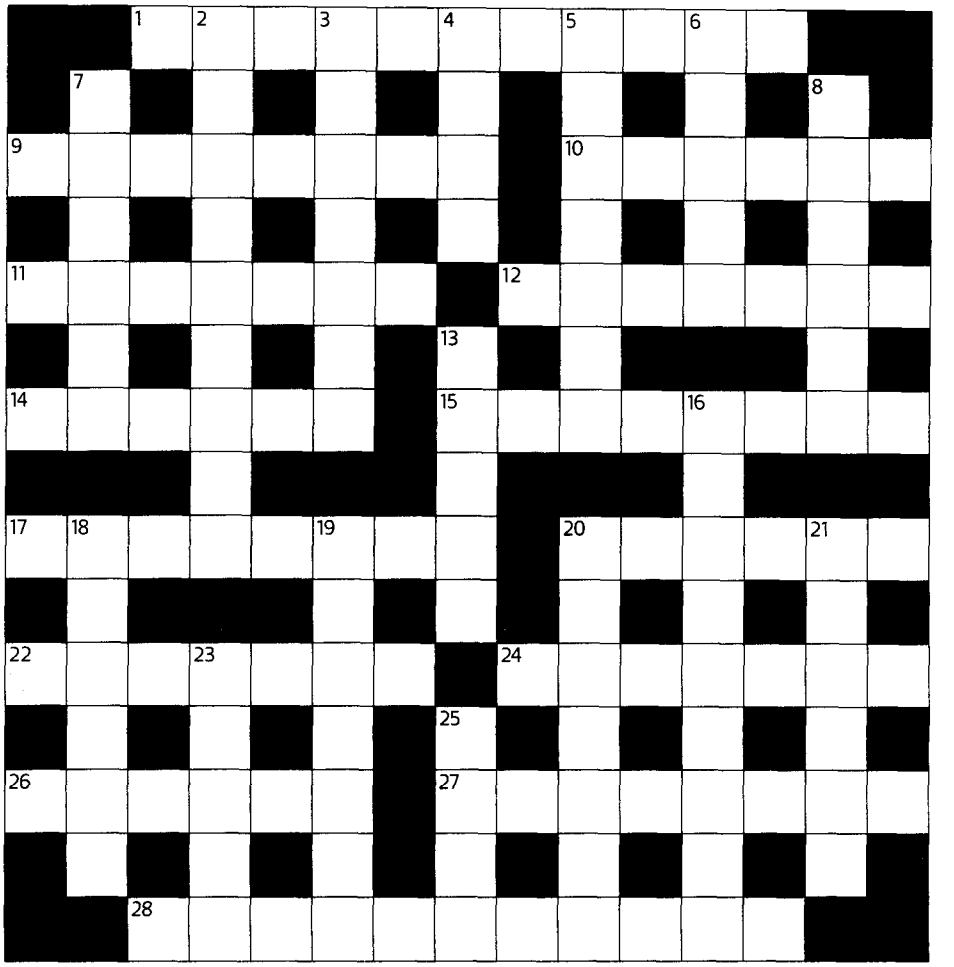
PUZZLE NO. 3066

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Civil war general having a bit of trouble with the Union, but bluffing his way through with this? (11)

9 Is the mast more out of line and rather "squirrelly" as one might say? (8)

10 A bit of an annoyance, to wander about talking, and then take to the air. (6)

11 Was one of Beethoven's sonatas so brightened up? (7)

12 A grand direction to the remains of what the dentate type does, if upset. (7)

14 Sounds like a Colette heroine gone back about it—just for a drink? (3-3)

15 Busy with nothing but thrown dice around the vessel? (8)

17 What might go on top with music played badly—rather peppery. (8)

20 Sharpens things up with things like baseball and football played the wrong way. (6)

22 Poet found at the capital of Washington, with a paid thug. (7)

24 Kiwi, possibly—likely to start with the very end an unknown quantity. (7)

26 Tom the actor, with what he might take when traveling. (6)

27 Alpha and Omega, when I'm thus confused with the angles of horizontal deviation. (8)

28 Killed by the sidesplitter inside, direction being given to the newspaper head, in short. (11)

DOWN

2 The spirit in reputed workers like cows, and such? (9)

3 What David was told to do with one of Donald's little relatives? (7)

4 and **13** Places in the house where bets are laid? They should lead somewhere. (9)

5 Does the musical instrument have a little less than a hundred, in the way the healthy eater might demand? (7)

6 and **23** Attempt to follow the river, as big business may be described. (10)

7 Worn by some people in the air about a right beginning? (6)

8 What Jason tried to steal because it was golden, which is only a way to take advantage of someone. (6)

13 See 4

16 By and of itself, kinda pretty, in a small way—perhaps to harass someone. (9)

18 Certainly not afloat with the remains of fire on what comes from mine! (6)

19 The fancy residence of Tom over the water. (7)

20 In a short month I am reaching a point that is not quite the last of fencing positions. (7)

21 and **25** One who doesn't behave in the moral fashion, in the way of a scary movie. (10)

23 See 6

25 See 21

PUZZLED? No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules" send for those of Mr. Lewis to: Puzzled, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, or access our website at www.thenation.com/about/crossword.mhtml.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3065

C	H	A	R	I	S	M	A	■	H	E	A	D	E	D
O	■	U	■	N	■	A	■	H	■	M	■	I	■	E
L	I	G	H	T	■	C	L	E	O	P	A	T	R	A
L	■	M	■	R	■	B	■	R	■	A	■	T	■	D
A	C	E	T	O	N	E	■	B	U	T	T	O	N	S
R	■	N	■	I	■	T	■	A	■	H	■	■	■	U
■	S	T	I	T	C	H	■	L	A	Y	O	V	E	R
M	■	E	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	A	■	E
A	U	D	I	T	E	D	■	N	O	V	E	L	S	■
N	■	■	■	H	■	E	■	O	■	E	■	U	■	E
P	L	A	G	U	E	S	■	M	E	R	M	A	I	D
O	■	R	■	M	■	I	■	I	■	D	■	B	■	I
W	E	L	L	B	E	G	U	N	■	I	S	L	E	S
E	■	E	■	E	■	N	■	E	■	C	■	E	■	O
R	E	S	I	D	E	■	J	E	T	T	I	S	O	N

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Take this test...

- ☐ Do you worry about keeping an erection during intercourse?
- ☐ Do you have a medical condition such as high blood pressure/cholesterol, hormone disorders, diabetes or depression?
- ☐ Do you want to improve your sexual confidence?
- ☐ Are you concerned your partner is disappointed in your sexual performance?

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Androvin™ provides a safe, discreet way to firmer, fuller erections, more intense orgasms and more overall energy.

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Generally speaking, men experience a decrease in erection quality with age. This is totally normal. Some causes are stress, poor nutrition, smoking, and certain medications. Whatever the reason, the usual result is a decrease in natural blood flow during arousal, leading to difficulty obtaining and maintaining an erection. Some men slowly lose firmness of their erections, while others lose the length of time their erections last. Unfortunately, this often-embarrassing situation can cause decreased self-esteem and result in serious emotional and relationship problems.

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Despite ridiculous claims to the contrary, there is no known ingestible product to alter the size or shape of your penis. But there is a way you can enjoy sexual health without embarrassing visits to the doctor, expensive prescriptions, painful injections into the penis, or surgical procedures. Androvin™ is a remarkable, once-a-day, non-prescription supplement that is guaranteed to increase your sexual desire and performance. And unlike prescription drugs that must be timed with precision and taken before a sexual encounter, all-natural Androvin—simply taken once daily—is designed to help maintain blood flow for firmer, fuller erections for as long as it's used. You're always ready to go!

Harder, Longer-Lasting Erections

Certain powerful ingredients in Androvin, known as vasodilators, help to relax smooth muscle tissue in the pelvic region. The result? An increased amount of blood flows freely to the penis, to create a fuller, harder, longer-lasting erection.

Now You Can Feel More Relaxed, Eager And Confident!

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The Androvin™ Difference

- Viagra®*, the most commonly prescribed drug for erectile dysfunction, may cause drug resistance in certain long-term users, cannot be used by people with certain cardiovascular conditions, does not address libido issues, and has shown severe side effects in some patients.
- The majority of over-the-counter sexual dysfunction products have little/no efficacy.
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- Androvin is produced under FDA approved conditions, using only the highest quality pharmaceutical-grade ingredients.

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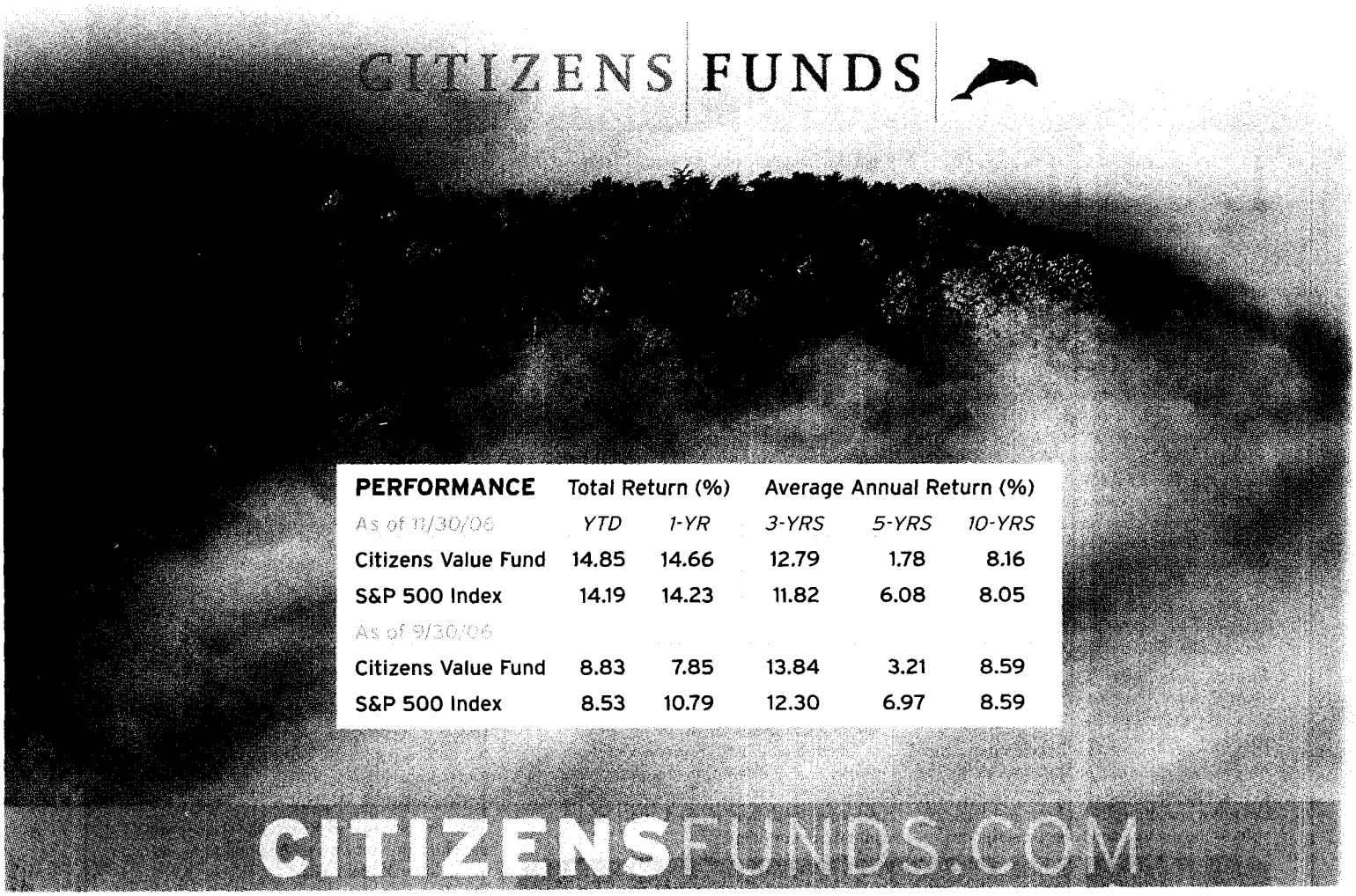

PERFORMANCE	Total Return (%)		Average Annual Return (%)		
As of 11/30/06	*YTD*	*1-YR*	*3-YRS*	*5-YRS*	*10-YRS*
Citizens Value Fund	14.85	14.66	12.79	1.78	8.16
S&P 500 Index	14.19	14.23	11.82	6.08	8.05
As of 9/30/06					
Citizens Value Fund	8.83	7.85	13.84	3.21	8.59
S&P 500 Index	8.53	10.79	12.30	6.97	8.59

Data presented reflects past performance, which is no guarantee of future results. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance data quoted. Performance data current to the most recent month end may be obtained online at www.citizensfunds.com. Performance data includes that of the Meyers Pride Value Fund, established on June 13, 1996 (fund's inception date), which contributed its portfolio securities in exchange for Standard shares of Citizens Value Fund on September 24, 2001. The investment return and principal value of an investment will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. The investment adviser has agreed to contractually limit fees and expenses through June 30, 2007, without which returns would have been lower. The S&P 500 Index is an unmanaged index comprised of 500 common stocks chosen for market size, liquidity and industry group representation. Direct investment cannot be made in this inde

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